

ERITREAN AMERICAN HARMONY MAGAZINE

VOL. 4 ISSUE 3/ OCT. - DEC./2025



An Exclusive Interview with Ms. Nahla
Valji, UN's Resident Coordinator in Eritrea

NCEA'S NATIONAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY GROUP QUARTERLY ONLINE MAGAZINE



NATIONAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY GROUP



National Public Diplomacy Working Principles

TRANSPARENCY

leads to clear
communication,
trust, & mutual
understanding



PARTICIPATION

helps to utilize:
our human,
political,
economic, social, &
intellectual capital



INCLUSION

Members, non-
members,
youth, men & women,
etc.



OWNERSHIP

of our narratives &
collective memory





WWW.DENDENMEDIA.COM

YOUR SOURCE FOR
ERI-TV & RADIO

INTERVIEWS



DRAMA SERIES



SPORTS



DEVELOPMENT REPORTS



NEWS • DOCUMENTARIES



COMEDIES



TABLE
OF

CONTENTS

ADULIS

CULTURE

LITERARY LEGACY

**AN EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW**

A BOOK REVIEW

COMMENTARY

MUSIC

ERITREA & THE UN

PHOTOGRAPHY

ASMARA ANTIQUE CARS



Antique car pictures by Ghidewon Musa



Adulis: The Ancient Powerhouse in The Region – And Ready to Reclaim Its Story

EZRA MUSA



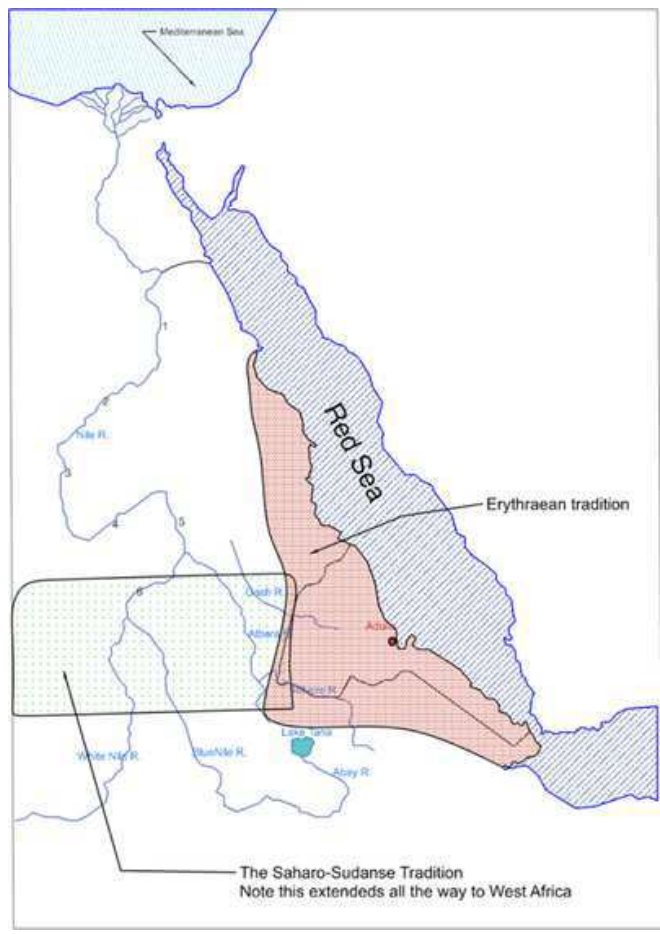
For far too long, the history of the Horn of Africa has been told backward, beginning with Aksum and treating the Eritrean ancient port of Adulis as its maritime appendage. But a growing body of archaeological, historical, and material-science research is finally rewriting the narrative. Evidence now shows that the ancient port city of Adulis, located on Eritrea's Red Sea coast, is older than Aksum, politically independent, economically influential, and technologically advanced in ways that place it among the great centers of the ancient world. This is not speculation; this is science catching up to what Eritrean heritage has long preserved. This evidence puts an end to other stories lacking a scientific basis.



OLDER THAN AKSUM: A TIMELINE BASED ON SCIENTIFIC FACTS

Excavations in the Adulis corridor have revealed material dating back 1500–500 BCE, centuries before Aksum emerged as a kingdom. Ceramic traditions, structural foundations, and imported goods demonstrate continuous occupation long before highland state formation. The port was a lived reality, a trade crossroads, and a cultural hub during eras when Aksum did not yet exist as a political entity.

Dr. Tsegay Medin and his young dynamic team at the Department of Archeology in the Commission of Culture and Sports, led by continue to study Adulis, Qohaito, Matara, Keskese, Sembel etc... to find more ancient finding from modern Eritrea Geography, systematically pushing the timeline further back.



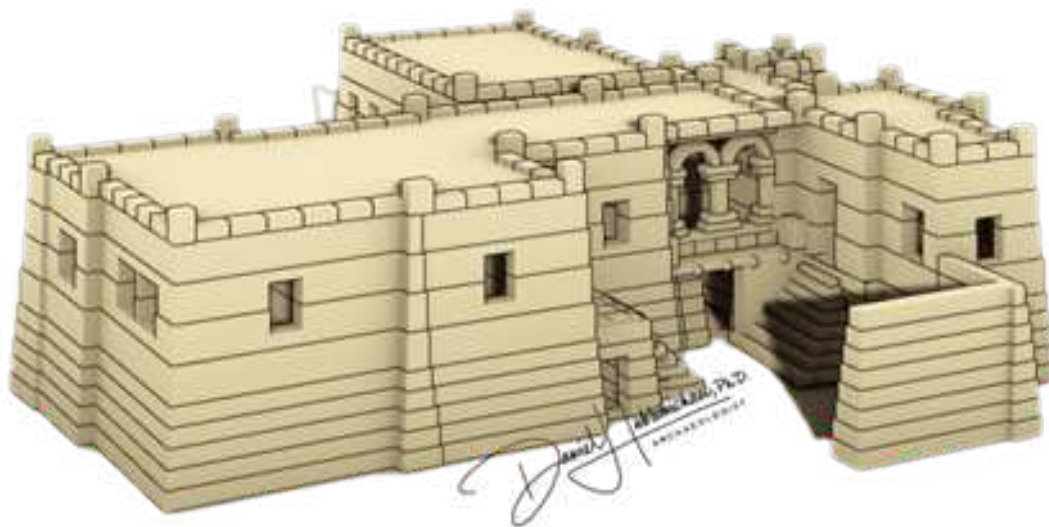
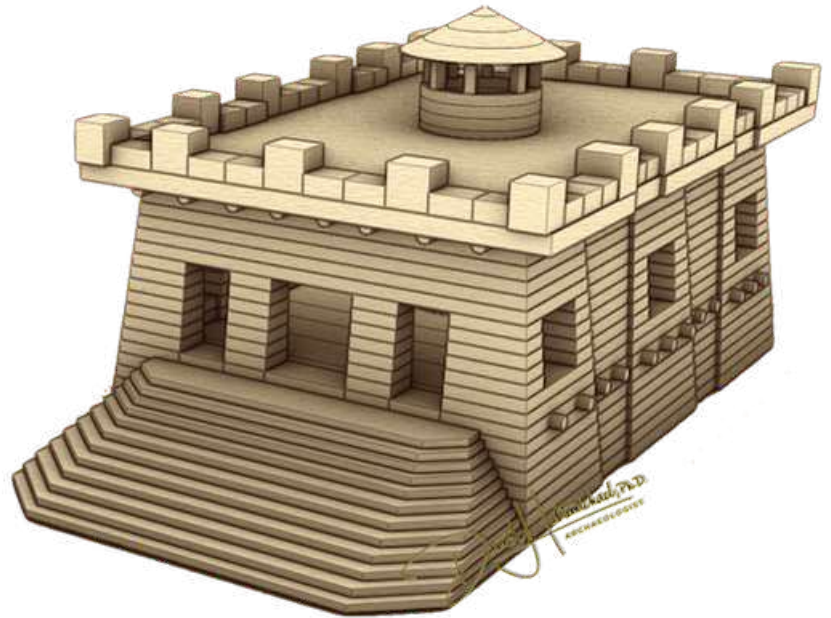
ADULIS: THE ANCIENT POWERHOUSE

Daniel T. Habtemichael's 489-page doctoral research from University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst), titled Modeling the Local Political Economy of Adulis 1,000 B.C.E. – C.E. 700 A.C.E., complements these excavations, utilizing scientific methodologies to model the city's political economy. Dr. Daniel T. Habtemichael's work, detailed across the podcast chapters (1–7) of the Eritrawi Podcast (YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@EritrawiPodcast>), shows that Adulis functioned as its own local political economy, not as an early dependency of Aksum.

Using 3D modeling and Energetic Analysis (Chapter 3) on 39 structures, Dr. Daniel T. Habtemichael's work provides scientific proof that the city possessed:

- A complex administrative hierarchy and significant wealth concentration.
- Specialized labor organization and construction require large, coordinated workforces.
- Unique Architecture: The labor time quantified through the analysis of Graduated Masonry proves a sustained commitment of resources indicative of a state-level system, not a satellite outpost.

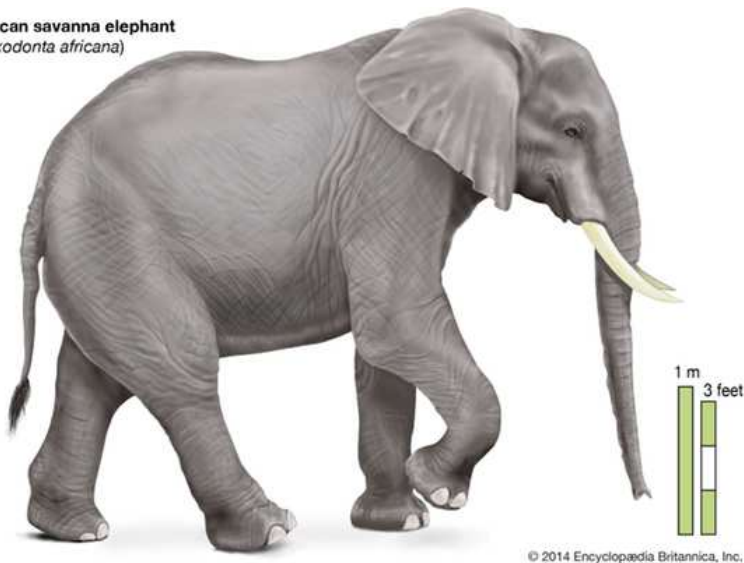


MILITARY EXPORT POWER: THE WAR-ELEPHANT AND GOLD INDUSTRIES

Adulis was not only a commercial port—it was a military and financial supplier of global importance (Chapter 4 & 5).

- The War-Elephant Industry: Classical sources and archaeological evidence confirm the port's role as the strategic hub for training, supplying, and exporting war elephants, specifically the African forest elephant (*Loxodonta africana cyclotus*). This was the ancient equivalent of modern heavy weaponry, driven by the Ptolemaic “arms race.” The immense, self-perpetuating cost of this military subsystem created a “guiding economic logic,” whereby elephants were used for “jural support” (enforcing laws) even in peacetime, proving the system was an internal, self-sustaining power structure. No “minor port” could dominate such a system. Only genuine regional power could.

African savanna elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)



© 2014 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

- Gold Concentration: The financial evidence is definitive: approximately 70% of all gold coins in the entire Northern Horn of Africa were found in Adulis (Chapter 4), proving an unmistakable concentration of wealth and financial authority that suggests other regional powers, perhaps even Aksum, were paying tribute.



- Structural Strength: The unique architecture of Adulis was designed to be robust enough to withstand the strength of elephants, a detail that further links the city's construction technology to its core military industry.

A STRUCTURED GOVERNMENT AND TRADE EMPIRE (CHAPTERS 1, 4, 6)

Adulis's continuous power and independence are confirmed by its political, religious, and economic structures:

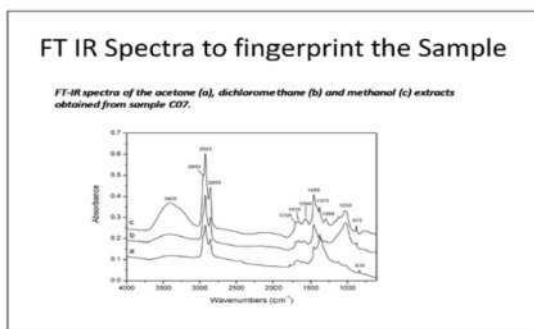
- Structured Government: The Eritrean Italian Adulis Project reveals a blueprint of a state: Monumental public architecture, administrative complexes, and a harbor engineered for international commerce. The existence of the Throne of Adulis (Chapter 4) and high-ranking figures like Bishop Moses of Adulis (who reportedly characterized the Aksumite king as a minor ruler) prove a robust, autonomous political and religious hierarchy.
- Red Sea Gatekeeper: Adulis controlled the movement of Aromatics (Chapter 6), Ivory, Gold, Exotic animals, and Military assets. Its geographic position made it essential to ancient Red Sea trade, a fact proven by Chapter 6, which confirmed Adulis as the logistical bottleneck and gatekeeper for the indispensable trade of frankincense.

MATERIAL SCIENCE CONFIRMS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE

I learned so much from Dr. Daniel T. Habtemichael's dissertation and the 7-part Eritrawi Podcast (YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@EritrawiPodcast>) series based on the study, I was further excited to gain additional material information from items found in Adulis. A part that particularly thrilled me is the finding of bitumen (natural asphalt), a material I deal with on a historical and technological basis.

A study published in *Heritage Science*—conducted by an international team that includes Dr. Abraham Zerai—used FT-IR (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy) to analyze fragments of torpedo jars excavated at Adulis.

Microscopy Image



The FT-IR spectrum image above strongly fits the known FT-IR fingerprint of natural asphalt/bitumen. It shows all the hallmark peaks used by material scientists and archaeometries to confirm bitumen in ancient Adulis.

- **Bitumen Discovery:** The results were decisive: the jars contained natural asphalt (bitumen). This discovery is a technological signature that reshapes how Adulis is understood. Historically, Bitumen was foundational to the world's earliest technological civilizations. For instance, evidence shows the use of asphalt in Ancient Babylon (Mesopotamia) dates back as far as 5,000 to 7,000 years ago (c. 5000–3000 BCE). King Nebuchadnezzar II, around 600 BCE, famously utilized asphalt extensively as a waterproofing membrane and mortar in monumental construction, including the famous temples and ziggurats. Similarly, in Ancient Egypt, the material was being used for shipbuilding, sealing, and mummification as far back as the 3rd Millennium BCE.

Technological Peer: The finding of this natural asphalt in the torpedo jars excavated at Adulis confirms that the city was not peripheral but was on par with the technological sophistication of ancient Babylon, Egypt, and the wider Near East. Given the timeline of the Adulis corridor (1500–500 BCE), and the continuous evidence of sophisticated imports, the use of bitumen technology confirms Adulis was participating in advanced technological networks dating back at least 2,500 to 3,500 years ago, placing it on the same technological footing as the great centers of the ancient world.

Adulis wasn't just a casual cluster of huts or a simple port village — it was an engineered port-city: its buildings reflect hybrid design combining monumental and functional architecture, resilient building materials (stone and basalt masonry), and practical storage systems tuned for long-distance trade and the demands of a grain and bulk-goods economy.

It proves Adulis was: connected to advance Near Eastern technological networks and elite long-distance trade circuits.; skilled in waterproofing, sealing, and storage techniques used only by sophisticated states.

A society that understands, imports, manipulates, and deploys bitumen is not peripheral. It is a civilization in conversation with the most advanced cultures of its age.

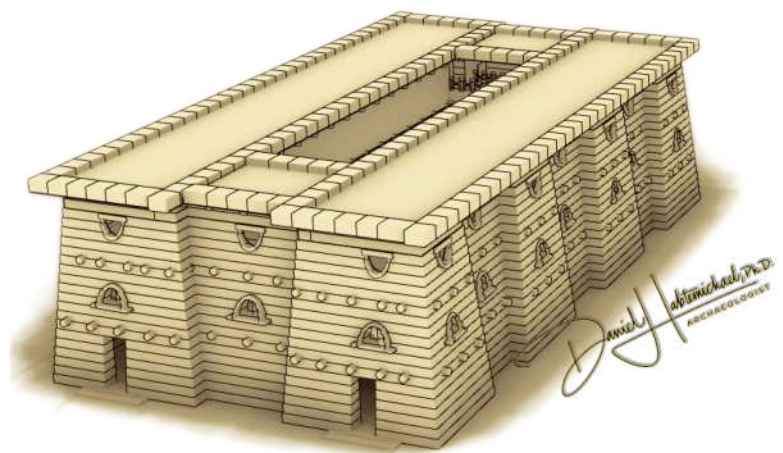
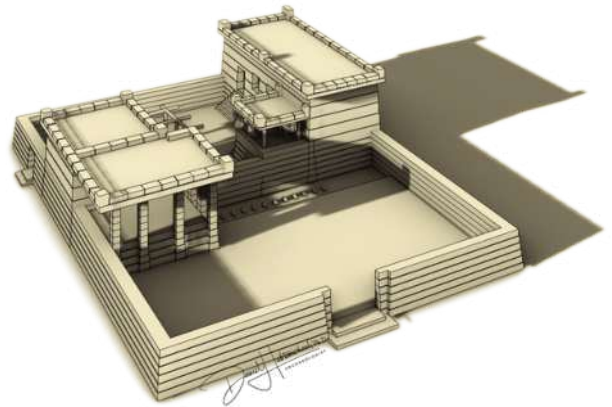
RECLAIMING THE NARRATIVE: TIME TO TELL OUR STORY

For centuries, outside narratives have minimized Adulis—reducing it to a footnote. But scientific evidence proves that Adulis was: Older than Aksum, politically independent, a military exporter, a technological innovator, and a major Red Sea trading empire.

As detailed in the Eritrawi Podcast series (Chapters 1–7), based on Dr. Daniel T. Habtemichael's work, Adulis's history is deeper, broader, and far more connected to the ancient world than colonial or modern revisionist narratives ever allowed. It is time for us to tell our story with clarity and confidence—and keep the dreamers, distorters, and historical revisionists at bay. Adulis is not a footnote in Aksumite history. Aksum is a chapter in the long, powerful history of Adulis.

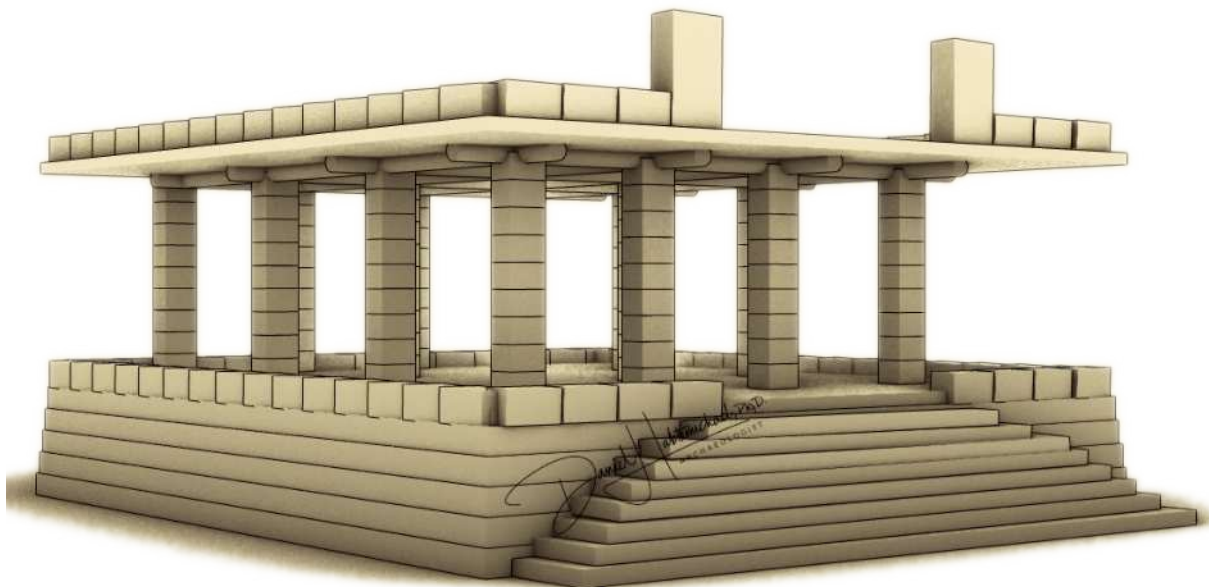
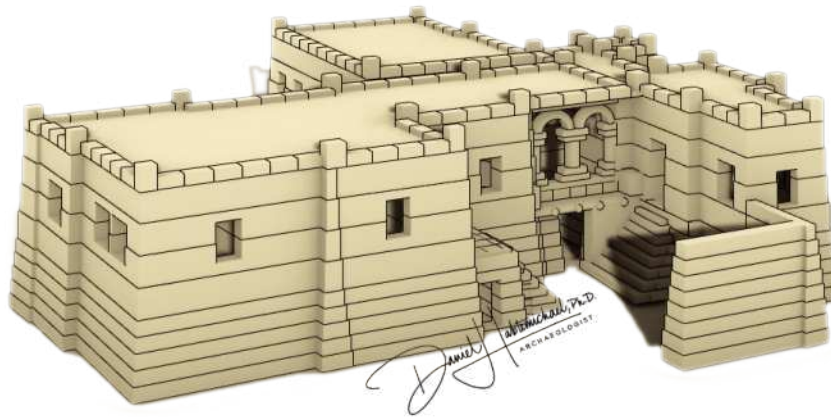
You can watch the 7 part series on Adulis by @EritrawiPodcast

- YouTube: <http://t.ly/oWStY>
- Spotify: <http://t.ly/LcQik>
- Apple Podcast: <http://t.ly/AYJZ2>



For centuries, outside narratives have minimized Adulis—reducing it to a footnote. But scientific evidence proves that Adulis was: Older than Aksum, politically independent, a military exporter, a technological innovator, and a major Red Sea trading empire.

ADULIS: THE ANCIENT POWERHOUSE



THE SONG I STILL CARRY

RAHEL MUSA

I remember the sound before the meaning. Children standing shoulder to shoulder in the schoolyard, some whispering, some distracted, some watching for a teacher's glance. Then the singing began. Not rushed. Not playful. Even and steady, the way voices sound when no one is trying to stand out.

It was a song about truth.

At that age, I did not think of it as instruction. It was simply part of the morning. My attention drifted to small details. A braid that would not stay in place. The way a friend leaned closer. Still, the words found their way in and stayed, the way things do when they are repeated without explanation.

ሐቂ ትኩን ሳንዳኸ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ኣይትፍለይ ኸባኸ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ካብ ንእስነትካ ጀምር፡ ኩሉ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ዕድሜካ ብመለኡ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ።

ሐቂ ንዕላማኸ ሐቂ ተዛረብ፡ ሓሶት መንቀሓ ካባኸ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ብሓሶት እንተምለጥካ፡ ንውረቱ ኸገደካ። እቲ ተባዕ ዘበለ ሐቂ ይዛረብ።

ተኣመኖ ጌጋኸ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ኣይትጥለማ ሳንዳኸ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ። ብሓሶት ዚነብር ሰብ ይበላሾ ቆልጢፉ፡ ስለዚ ኣይትሰነፍ፡ ሐቂ ተዛረብ።

The meaning was direct.

Let truth be your closest companion. Speak the truth. Do not separate from it. Start when you are young. Carry it through your whole life.

Let it guide you. If you lie, there are consequences. Bravery shows itself through truth.

Take responsibility for your mistakes. A life built on lies has no depth.

CULTURE

We sang this song every day. Thousands of children did. It was written by Memhir Weldeab Woldemariam, one of the pioneers of Eritrea's independence movement. He understood that a nation does not survive on words alone. It survives on shared expectations about how people live with one another.

Today, I live far from Asmara. I am a grandmother in the diaspora. My grandchildren speak English more easily than Tigrinya. Their world is shaped by American television, quick dialogue, confident explanations, and people who talk their way through everything.

Sometimes I sit nearby while they watch. I notice how often characters avoid responsibility with clever words. How rarely they pause and say, "I was wrong." My grandchildren learn from this without realizing it. One day, one of them looked at me and said, "If I tell the truth, I will get in trouble."

I thought of the song.

In Eritrean culture, truth was never taught as a way to avoid consequences. It was taught as a way to face them. You spoke honestly even when it cost you something. Especially then. Admitting a mistake was not about humiliation. It was about maintaining your integrity.

There is an old saying we grew up with. If you bury truth feet first, it will still come out headfirst. You can delay it. You can hide it for a while, but it rises on its own time.

Eritrea's history demanded truth-telling. Colonization, war, displacement, and resistance required people to rely on one another. Lies endanger lives. Truth built trust. Even when the truth was painful, it was seen as cleaner than comfort built on deception.

For those of us living far from home, this part of Eritrean culture still travels with us. It shows up in quiet ways. In how seriously we take responsibility at work. In how elders insist on accountability within families. In how many Eritreans value humility over show, even when success is earned.

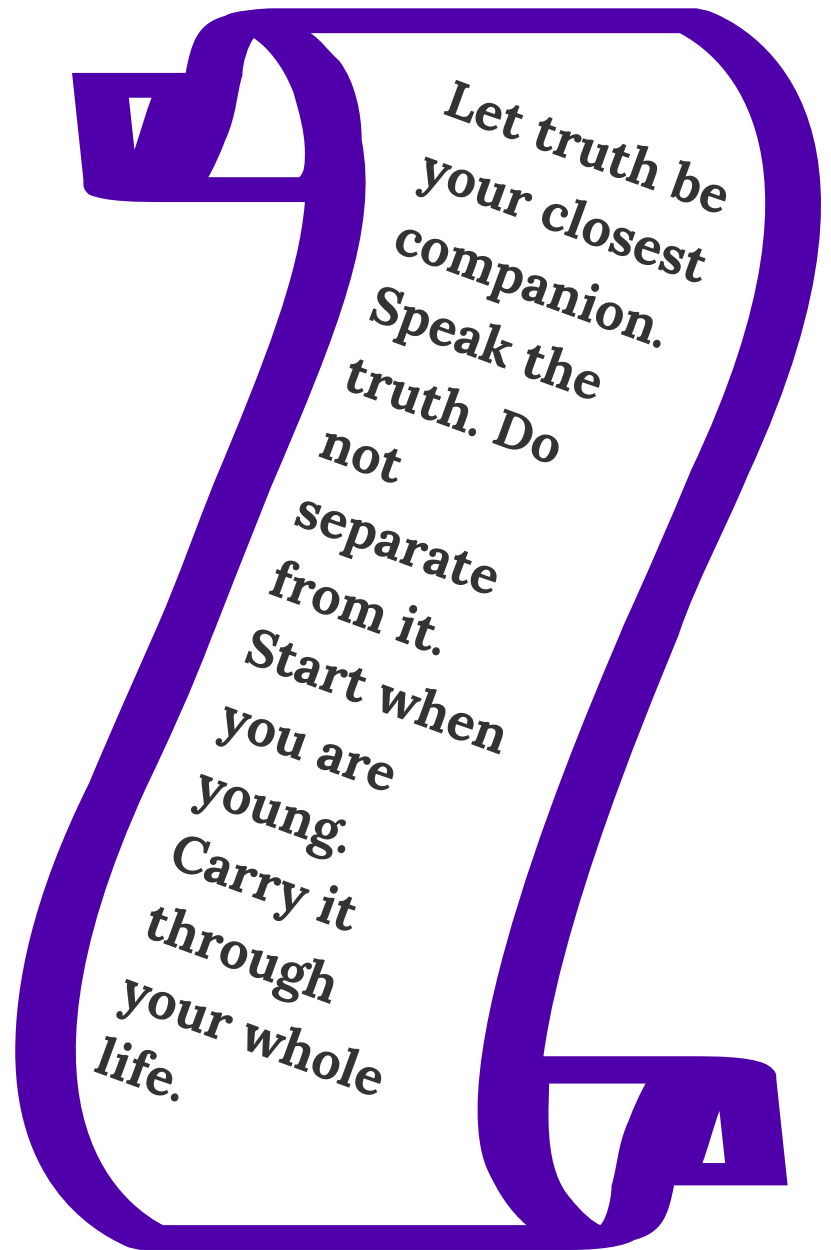
It also shows up in our discomfort with performative language. Eritrean culture tends to respect people who do not talk too much about themselves. People who act first, then allow others to speak for them. Too many explanations raise questions. Too much display suggests uncertainty. Truth does not need decoration.

That is why songs like the one we sang matter. They remind us that culture is not only food, dress, or music. Culture lives in what is practiced before it is understood. It settles in early, without ceremony, and shapes how people move through the world.

I no longer stand in that schoolyard, but the song stayed with me in ordinary moments. In how I speak to my grandchildren. In how I correct without shaming. In how I admit a mistake without defending it. I want them to see that truth does not require volume. It requires steadiness.

Truth stayed with me, not as a rule to recite, but as a way of being. I hope it stays with them too, even as they grow up in a culture that often rewards confidence over care.

That quiet commitment to truth is an Eritrean inheritance worth keeping.



TRUTH / ሐቂ

AN ASPECT OF THE LITERARY LEGACY OF ERITREAN ANCESTORS

**SOLOMON
TSEHAYE**

I find it appropriate to make a disclaimer right from the start of presenting this article. When I was approached to contribute to this publication on traditional Eritrean culture during my tour in the United States, and on relatively short notice, the only material I could write about was my research on Massé and Melqes. And yet, I wanted to at least briefly introduce the reader to the other important research endeavors recently conducted on oral poetry in Eritrea, with the minimal information I could recall from my memory. This is, therefore, the explanation for the imbalance of treatment between the Massé and Melqes one and the other four researches.



INTRODUCTION

All human societies produce art that reflects various aspects of life at every stage of their existence. The arts - drawings (paintings), sculptures, handicrafts, music, songs, dances, theatre, films, literature, etc., as created and performed by the talented members of the given society, portray the multifacets of social life and human interaction with nature.

This being a very general statement about the relationship between the arts and society, the present, relatively short article deals with a specific area of literature in Eritrea. The subject in question is oral poetry, and the article provides updates on research carried out in four languages so far to document and preserve that oral heritage for posterity.

TIGRINYA ORAL POETRY RESEARCHES

These Tigrinya oral poetry studies belong to two genres: Massé and Melqes, and oral song poetry.

Massé and Melqes Research

Massé and Melqes' research has been an ongoing project for more than 20 years now. The study is being conducted by the author of this article, who published the first volume of his research in 2012. Two more volumes are also expected to be published as a result of this long-term research endeavor.

In 2025, the author toured the USA, giving presentations mainly on Massé and Melqes' to audiences gathered at Eritrean community centers. He held 21 performance events across cities in America, and the impact of the presentations has been assessed as very positive. The overall evaluation was that the events were both educational, informative, and entertaining.

Massé (awlo) and Melqes are generally considered to be the highest forms of Tigrinya oral poetry and are recited on two different occasions. Massé is performed at weddings or other festive events, while Melqes is performed at funerals and other times of sadness to commemorate and mourn the dead. But Massé and Melqes are not just celebratory or commemorative; they can also be social critique and satire. This artistic and popular quality gives these poetic forms the power to influence society significantly.

Massé and Melqes convey highly valued messages on almost every aspect of life in an aesthetic way. Literally, there is no facet of social life that Massé and Melqes do not discuss. What makes Massé and Melqes' enduring oral literary works is the depth and philosophical approach with which they look at social issues.

What makes Massé and Melqes' enduring oral literary works is the depth and philosophical approach with which they look at social issues.

Massé and Melqes serve as reference material for historians, especially when written or documented material is unavailable. Since Massé and Melqes mostly reflect social reality, they can provide historical fact and evidence. They also revitalize language by preserving archaic words, idiomatic expressions, sayings, and various figures of speech.

Massé and Melqes entertain and stimulate the imagination. As they are rich in humor, satire, and other forms of expression, they are both amusing and thought-provoking.

Massé and Melqes are usually composed while they are recited. Such spontaneity makes Massé and Melqes a unique form of oral poetry. The authors of Massé and Melqes (called Masségnatat in Tigrinya) are oral poets who have developed exceptional skills in thinking quickly, making them sharp and witty. They possess a vast knowledge of history, culture, religion, law, genealogy, and diverse aspects of social and civic affairs. They are an intellectual elite on whose creativity and wisdom society relies. Some of them are even believed to have prophetic capabilities, with their sayings frequently quoted in relation to various social circumstances.

The earliest Massé retrieved from memory was the one composed by Feleskinos around 1765, about 260 years ago. Although Massé and Melqes were certainly practiced long before that time, the poetry no longer exists in public memory by the time this research began at the turn of the 21st century. This means that those who had memories of Massé and Melqes composed before that time had already passed away, having their long-accumulated wisdom and knowledge buried with them.

AN ASPECT OF THE LITERARY LEGACY OF ERITREAN ANCESTORS SEARCH

Oral poets of Massé and Melqes, the Masségnatat, are listed in appendix 1 (pages 495 - 511) of "Massén Melqesn Qeddamat", a Tigrinya book (Volume I) published by this article's author. Here are but a few names to share: Feleskinos, Weldedingl Geldu, Ugbit Girmu, Tombosa Weldemichael, Teweldemedhin Zemenu, Solomon Kelib, Kahsay Uqbay, Debesay Chirom, Beraki Seare, Berhane Asta, Misgun Temelso, Mezgebo Hailu, Abraha Medhin, Tewelde Measho, Bahta Kifle, Asgedom Meqdm, Temelso Kelete, Abraha Berhane, Teklemichael Gebre, Negash Bairau, Gebremedhin Bisrat.

There are plans to translate Massé and Melqes into English and possibly other languages, so that they can be read and appreciated by a wider international public as well as by fellow Eritreans raised in the diaspora who have difficulty understanding Tigrinya. By way of example of the translation effort underway, this article presents a Melqes "May I Try" and a Massé "Fly," both authored by Weldedingl Geldu when he was only seventeen years old.

"May I Try" was Weldedingl's first Melqes (elegy) ever. That is why he started his Melqes saying the title phrase. He composed it in Mes'hal Weddekkele to commemorate the passing away of a wealthy woman with a noble background. She was also known for being generous in helping people experiencing poverty. The woman was the legitimate wife of a husband who also had a mistress at the periphery of the village. As a teenager, Weldedingl wondered why the woman's enormous wealth could not prevent her from dying, and he also thought that the mistress must be very happy to replace her as his wife and to share in the wealth.

To the surprise of a huge crowd attending the burial service, Weldedingl is said to have come straight from a nearby field, where he was tending his sheep, to the center of the ceremony to make the elegiac poem. Feeling an irresistible urge to compose and perform the Melqes, he made his debut. Taking a position in the midst of the funeral crowd, Weldedingl, the shepherd, lamented the death of the respected woman in reference to the husband's mistress, as follows:

MAY I TRY?

May I try to make an elegy
May I try to tell her history?
She is the daughter of a lord
And slept in a golden bed,
Daughter of respectable ladies
And owner of cattle herds;
But, isn't it a pity
The wealthy woman, who fed the poor and the needy
Couldn't escape death with all that plenty.

I am surprised by the other woman
While people are mourning, she is having fun,
Not realizing that, be it soon or late
She is destined for the same fate.

Weldedingl's public performance at an unusually young age marked the beginning of his extraordinarily brilliant career in oral poetry.

Some days after the funeral ceremony, the mistress, who was referred to as "the other woman" by the young poet, had him summoned to her house. She claimed that she felt very sad by the death of the lady, hence embarrassed by what he said in the presence of all the people who attended the funeral. She asked him angrily if he had seen her having fun during times of sadness. He responded, "No, Madam, there is no way I could see you in person having fun, because I am always out in the fields looking after my sheep. But I imagine, deep inside, you have the desire to be her substitute. It is out of this understanding that the words came to my mouth."

Though impressed by his answer, she wanted to challenge him by asking whether poetic words came easily to his mouth. She, therefore, asked him to instantly compose a poem about a fly that was passing by her eyes. No sooner had she uttered her words than he began to say his Massé.

FLY

Oh fly!

A useless wandering creature

Breeding in the availability of milk and moisture,

To the embarrassment of the best cooks

You dive into the stew to relax,

Flying to forbidden locations

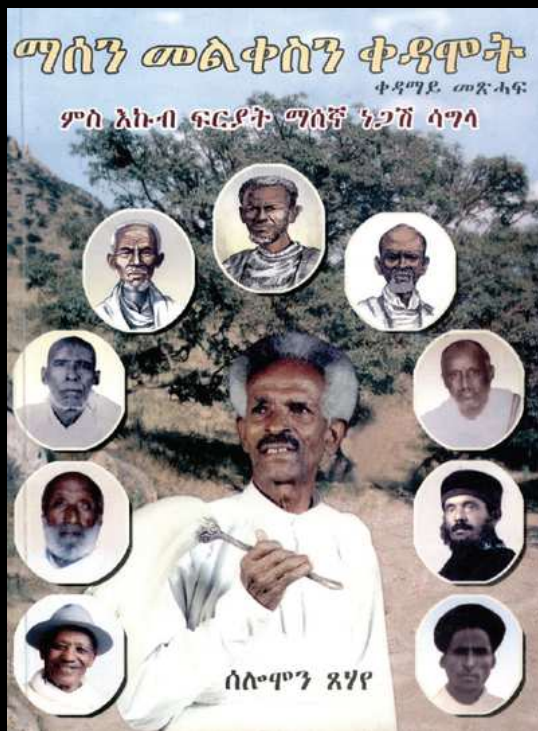
You see Madam's private parts

Shame on you, mischievous fly!

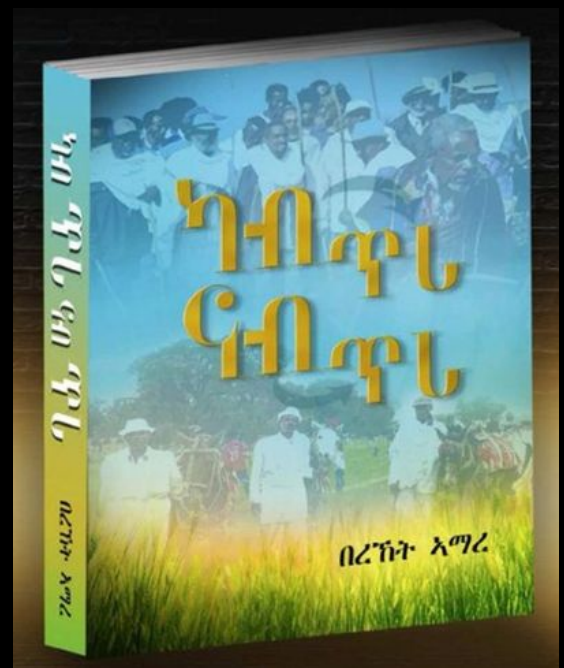
She was dazzled by his wit. But for fear that he might create yet another poem with unfavourable commentary, she hurriedly sent him off after handing him a gift in appreciation of his talent.

That is why he gave his book the title "Kab Tirri Nab Tirri," which means "From January to January." It is a must-read book for anyone interested in Tigrinya traditional culture. The book is an asset that one has to keep permanently for reference.

Bereket had planned to record the songs so that the hundreds of melodies with which the oral poems are sung could be preserved and passed on to future generations, but he has not yet been able to accomplish his goal due to a lack of budget. Whatever the cost, the documentation/recording, and dissemination of the songs and melodies that have reflected the people's soul and identity for centuries remain a vital task awaiting concerted effort to implement.



Masse and Melqes



Kab Tiri Nab Tiri/From January to January

ORAL SONG POETRY RESEARCH

Bereket Amare undertook oral song-poetry research in Tigrinya. Bereket had published Volume I of his study on genealogy and oral history under the title "TariK Senselet Weledotat". He is presently working on Volume II of the same title. He studied oral song and related poetry, sung year-round across various localities within Tigrinya culture. In his wide-ranging research, he brought to light the numerous ceremonies, rituals, festivals, and other occasions of the Tigrinya tradition that occur in different months and seasons of the year.



Bereket Amare

TIGRE ORAL POETRY RESEARCH

Mohammed Said Osman carried out the Tigre oral poetry research. Mohammed Said is a published poet and is also credited with scriptwriting for the Tigre-language television series, among many other contributions.

He conducted an extensive study of oral poetry over ten years across the relatively broad Tigre-speaking regions of Eritrea. It is a government-financed project, started under the auspices of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Education, and continued under the Cultural Affairs Department, Commission of Culture and Sports. The research involved a large number of informants, and hundreds of poems covering a broad range of themes were collected. Out of the tens of oral poets whose works are featured in the upcoming book, the following are some of the leading oral poets: Zeyneb Yassin, Umer Ibrahim, Kentiebay Hamid Hassen, Osman Idris W'iera, Mohammed Ali Olbab, and Idris Ibrahim Amir. The research outcome is prepared in a volume of more than 500 pages and is awaiting publication.

Mohammed Said is considering translating a selection of Tigre oral poetry into Tigrinya, and that will help promote cross-cultural exchange among Eritrean languages.



Mohammed Said Osman

SAHO ORAL POETRY RESEARCH

The same government body conducted the Saho oral poetry research as it did for Tigre. The researcher is Abdu Mohammed Ibrahim, a poet who frequently contributes to Saho-language radio programs in Eritrea. He studied and collected Saho oral poetry for more than 10 years, resulting in a volume of over 500 pages, now at the publishing stage.

Having interviewed a considerable number of depository tellers, Abdu collected several hundred oral poems composed by oral poets such as Farikobe, Hajji Saleh Indego, Ab Umer Allud, Ab Umer Hammado, Fatuma Ge-As, and Ibrahim Deranka.

Farikobe was an exceptionally outstanding oral poet who could instantly create lyrics and sing them by beating drums, or compose Masséne (meaning Massé in Saho). Farikobe's more than 200 poems have been retrieved from public memory, and bringing him to the limelight is one of the achievements of this research.

Abdu has also initiated translating Farikobe's poetry into Tigrinya and publishing it, so that Tigrinya readers can appreciate his creativity. Translating that body of poetry into English and other languages should also be considered seriously.



Abdu Mohammed Ibrahim

AN ASPECT OF THE LITERARY LEGACY OF ERITREAN ANCESTORS SEARCH

NARA ORAL POETRY RESEARCH

Like the Tigre and Saho research, the Nara oral poetry research was also a government project.

The research task was given to Dawud Adem Abushush, a Nara language educator with extensive experience in the literary development of the language. He also contributes to many performance-related cultural and artistic activities.

Paying close attention to the most important dialects of the Nara language, he studied oral poetry for more than ten years, interviewing knowledgeable people versed in the traditional culture of the Nara ethnic group.

The Nara oral poetry, much of which is oral song poetry sung on the occasions of various festivals and ceremonies, has been compiled in a volume projected to be published in the near future.

CONCLUSION

Two significant activities complement each other and must be carried out in relation to the topic. Firstly, stepping up related research efforts to preserve Eritrea's oral heritage is necessary for safeguarding the Eritrean people's identity. Then, having been documented for preservation, the heritage needs to be disseminated through all possible means so that citizens acquire knowledge and appreciate the wisdom passed down from our ancestors in their respective languages.

The teaching of oral literature as part of the school curriculum and as material for media broadcast in well-researched serial arts and culture programs is instrumental in the transmission of literary and artistic knowledge from generation to generation. The production of songs, novels, plays, poetry, films, paintings, sculptures, and other artworks based on our oral literature, oral history, and various traditions further deepens our self-understanding, thereby creating a strong sense of identity and self-esteem.

The teaching of oral literature as part of the school curriculum and as material for media broadcast in well-researched serial arts and culture programs is instrumental in the transmission of literary and artistic knowledge from generation to generation.



Dawud Adem Abushush



TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

I CURRENTLY SERVE AS THE UNITED NATIONS (UN) RESIDENT COORDINATOR (RC) IN ERITREA.

Most of my professional life has been with the United Nations, and before that with civil society organizations based in South Africa. Across different roles and themes, the thread in my career has been a focus on social justice, equality, peace, and sustainable development, especially the question of how institutions and public policy can create meaningful change and opportunities for people.

My professional story is also deeply connected to my personal history, which is where I believe my original motivation for this work - and passion for the United Nations - comes from. My family's story spans three continents and encompasses many of the issues the UN was created to respond to: forced migration, political instability, inequality, and underdevelopment. It's a perspective I carry with me in my role in Eritrea today, where the UN works with a focus on partnership, dignity, and development rooted in national priorities.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR, AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE UN COUNTRY TEAM? EMOTIONALLY RESONANT THEMES

The UN Resident Coordinator (RC) is the UN Secretary-General's representative at the country level, tasked with coordinating the work of the UN Country Team (UNCT), which consists of all UN agencies, funds, and programs, resident and non-resident, operating in the country.

The role is to ensure that the UN system works coherently and efficiently together, making the best use of our respective capacities, resources, and expertise. In practice, this means aligning our collective efforts with the country's priorities, facilitating dialogue with government and partners, and ensuring that the UN delivers as one to achieve meaningful results for people.

The elements of my career I have enjoyed the most have always been those that focused on building bridges - between people, governments, and organizations - to make sure development is inclusive and sustainable.

Serving as RC in Eritrea over the past two years has been an incredible privilege and a real learning opportunity. Eritrea is a country where we, as the international community, have much to learn from the emphasis on self-reliance, strong national ownership of development processes, solidarity, and dignity.

WHAT IS THE CORE ROLE, OPERATION, AND MISSION OF THE UN COUNTRY TEAM IN ERITREA?

The UNCT's mission is to accompany Eritrea in its own national development pathway and priorities, and, through that, advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our operations span health, education, food security, climate resilience, and social protection, as well as key economic areas such as trade, industrialization, and financing for development, which directly impact people's lives. We do this through technical expertise, policy support, capacity development, and leveraging global resources for economic development. We work hand in hand with government institutions and communities to strengthen systems that deliver on local priorities.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MS. NAHLA VALJI, UN'S RESIDENT COORDINATOR IN ERITREA

HOW DO THE UNCT OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS RELATE TO THE COUNTRY'S PRIORITIES?

The UNCT's mission is to accompany Eritrea in its own national development pathway and priorities, and, through that, advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our operations span health, education, food security, climate resilience, and social protection, as well as key economic areas such as trade, industrialization, and financing for development, which directly impact people's lives. We do this through technical expertise, policy support, capacity development, and leveraging global resources for economic development.

We do this through technical expertise, policy support, capacity development, and leveraging global resources for economic development. We work hand in hand with government institutions and communities to strengthen systems that deliver on local priorities.

HOW DO THE UNCT OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS RELATE TO THE COUNTRY'S PRIORITIES?

The UN does not come with a "one-size-fits-all" plan. The Sustainable Development Goals are a shared global roadmap, but how they are achieved needs to reflect national realities if they are to succeed and be sustainable.

In Eritrea, this means that our work is shaped jointly with the Government and in close consultation with national institutions and communities. We focus on areas where the UN can add technical value, support national systems, and complement existing efforts rather than duplicate them. Our Cooperation Framework – our partnership agreement that encompasses all areas where the UN and Government work together - is fully aligned with Eritrea's national development agenda and reflects these priorities. This alignment ensures that our programs are not externally imposed but rather co-created with national stakeholders.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MS. NAHLA VALJI.

WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF THE COUNTRY BEFORE YOU CAME, AND NOW?

Eritrea has fascinated me for many years. In university, one of my first essays was on the role of women in national liberation struggles. It was then that I first learned about Eritrea, the fight for independence, the number of women who fought on the front lines, and the impact, not just in numbers but in their roles and achievements. So even before I had the chance to visit, I knew this was a country where the philosophy of equality was not just rhetoric but truly informed the new nation's identity.

In 2019, I had the opportunity to visit Eritrea with the UN Deputy Secretary-General. In just those few days, it was clear to me that this is a unique and beautiful country – from its people to its topography to its food and coffee! - and everything in between. Being here has deepened my understanding of how the nation's values are lived in practice, and I have witnessed firsthand the strength of communities, the pride in national identity, and the determination to chart a sovereign path of development

DOES THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES?

Yes, very much so. While all countries agree on the SDGs, development is shaped by history, geography, resources, culture, social values, and a vision. Sustainability in Eritrea, for example, is closely linked to self-reliance, long-term thinking, community responsibility, and strong ownership at all levels of development processes. Our job is to adapt the UN's support to fit that context. Eritrea's emphasis on self-reliance and resilience is something we respect, value, and build on.

HOW DOES THE UN MODEL RELATE TO THE ERITREAN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT?

The UN development model emphasizes inclusivity, national ownership, and long-term sustainability. These principles resonate strongly with Eritrea's development philosophy. In fact, our Cooperation Framework is titled after a core principle of the SDGs – Leave No One Behind. This principle is central here in Eritrea, and the Government often reminds us to focus our partnership on the furthest reaches and ensure that development touches every individual and every community. Similarly, the UN model revolves around the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. We see these reflected in the Government's priorities as well.

WHAT IS CULTURE'S ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

Culture shapes how societies organize - what they value, how they see themselves in relation to the world, and how they see their roles and responsibilities in relation to each other. Development efforts are most effective when they build on cultural strengths rather than trying to override them. In Eritrea, values such as social cohesion, collective responsibility, and self-reliance are powerful assets for sustainable development.

THE UN/GOSE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK HAS PASSED MIDWAY: HOW DO YOU SEE ITS PROGRESS?

At the midpoint, the Cooperation Framework has made real progress, particularly in foundational areas such as health, education, food systems, climate resilience, and data.

Funding constraints remain a challenge, and more so today than ever before, given the global context. New and non-traditional partners, along with innovative resource mobilization efforts, are helping bridge gaps, and we are learning that strong coordination and flexibility are key to progress. Eritrea is also moving away from development funding toward more transformative financing models for development. This is an area where we, as the UN, are making our own shift, and I hope we can reflect it more strongly in our next Cooperation Framework.

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF GENDER ISSUES, AND WHAT COLLABORATION HAS THE UN DONE IN ERITREA?

As I mentioned, my first encounter with Eritrea was through the lens of women's equality. This was also the case for my first visit as the Deputy Secretary-General's mission here in 2019 was focused on women, peace, and security, as well as development. It's an issue that I have worked on in different ways and feel personally committed to.

Eritrea has fascinated me for many years. In university, one of my first essays was on the role of women in national liberation struggles. It was then that I first learned about Eritrea, the fight for independence, the number of women who fought on the front lines, and the impact, not just in numbers but in their roles and achievements.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MS. NAHLA VALJI.



Gender equality isn't just about fairness or rights, crucially important as these principles are. It is also about unlocking potential. Ultimately, no country can succeed if it leaves half of its population behind.

And while no country has achieved gender equality, Eritrea has much to be proud of and share in this area, including in girls' education and progress towards the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation. These are areas where we, as the UN, remain a steadfast partner. We will also continue to partner with and encourage progress in areas where gaps exist or where more can be done to fully realize women's contribution to national development.

IN WHAT WAY HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE SERVING IN ERITREA IMPACTED YOUR VIEWS OF SELF-RELIANCE, GENDER EQUALITY, AND PARTNERSHIP?

My experience here has reinforced the idea that self-reliance and partnership go hand in hand. Strong national ownership actually makes partnerships more effective and meaningful. I have also seen that progress on gender equality is most sustainable when it is rooted in social values, community realities, and leadership, rather than driven externally.

ERITREA HAS BEEN UNDER UNILATERAL SANCTIONS FOR SEVERAL YEARS, AND THE UN CONSIDERS SUCH UCMS AS ILLEGAL. WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION OF THE UN IN THIS REGARD?

The Secretary-General has consistently underscored that unilateral coercive measures—that is, measures not authorized by the Security Council—raise serious concerns for multilateralism and international cooperation, particularly in contexts where development and humanitarian needs are significant. The UN has also highlighted that such measures can have unintended and far-reaching impacts on civilian populations and may affect the enjoyment of human rights, including access to health, food, and development.

In this context, the United Nations' responsibility is to remain guided by its Charter mandate. This includes continuing to support Eritrea's development priorities, safeguarding humanitarian and development space, documenting and communicating, through objective, evidence-based analysis, the humanitarian and developmental impacts of unilateral measures, and encouraging dialogue and cooperation.

AT THE RECENT UNGA MEETING, THE ERITREAN DELEGATION MET WITH UNITED NATIONS (UN) SECRETARY GENERAL (SG) GUTERRES, AND THE UN'S ROLE IN ERITREA WAS HIGHLY ACKNOWLEDGED. WHAT WERE THE ACHIEVEMENTS THAT WERE MENTIONED?

Well, I couldn't tell you exactly as I wasn't in the room! But the feedback received has been positive, and I am grateful to Minister Osman for highlighting and acknowledging the partnership with the UN team in Eritrea. We are committed to building trust, deepening development efforts, and emphasizing constructive engagement between Eritrea and the UN system as a whole.

FINALLY, WHAT MESSAGES DO YOU HAVE TO WOMEN OF ERITREA, THE YOUTH, AND ERITREANS IN THE DIASPORA?

To the women of Eritrea: your strength and resilience have helped shape this nation at every stage of its history. From the liberation struggle to community life today, your contributions are profound and enduring, inspiring far beyond Eritrea's borders.

To the youth: you carry the responsibility and the opportunity of shaping the next chapter of national development. Your creativity, ideas, and energy are essential. I would encourage you to build on the values, discipline, and sense of collective purpose you inherit -combined with new skills and perspectives, this is a powerful and unmatched foundation for the future.

To the diaspora: Eritrea's diaspora is one of the most engaged, committed, and connected I have encountered. You serve as an essential bridge between Eritrea and the broader world, and one that can build greater understanding and cooperation.



To the women of Eritrea: your strength and resilience have helped shape this nation at every stage of its history. From the liberation struggle to community life today, your contributions are profound and enduring, inspiring far beyond Eritrea's borders.

To the youth: you carry the responsibility and the opportunity of shaping the next chapter of national development. Your creativity, ideas, and energy are essential. I would encourage you to build on the values, discipline, and sense of collective purpose you inherit -combined with new skills and perspectives, this is a powerful and unmatched foundation for the future.

To the diaspora: Eritrea's diaspora is one of the most engaged, committed, and connected I have encountered. You serve as an essential bridge between Eritrea and the broader world, and one that can build greater understanding and cooperation.



ERITREA AND THE UN: A NEW LANGUAGE OF PARTNERSHIP

WHY THE UN'S APPROACH IN ASMARA MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT STORY AFRICA ISN'T TALKING ABOUT.

BY ASA

The hall at the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers was full, alive with an energy I hadn't felt before at any event hosted by international partners in Asmara.

The event, titled "Self-Reliance and Partnership: The Eritrean Experience and Its Global Relevance," was organized by the UN in Eritrea as part of this year's UN Day celebrations. At first glance, it looked like just another panel. But as the discussion unfolded, it became clear that this was more than that.

The UN had not come to explain Eritrea but to create space for others to listen. For once, it felt like a misunderstood story was finally being told by those who had lived it. That, to me, was radical.

Too often, international conversations about Africa are held in rooms where Africans are spoken for, summarized, or corrected. Eritrea, in particular, has lived for years under layers of misrepresentation; its choices questioned, its policies measured against foreign blueprints, and its development path scattered with political, economic, and social mines.

Yet here, on this breezy Asmara afternoon, the UN Country Team gave the stage to a diverse group of panelists — a multilateral development representative, a bilateral partner, and a neighboring country — to share their views and experiences on Eritrea and its policy of self-reliance.

At its heart, however, the event centered Eritrea's own voice through the Eritrean panelist, Redae Tesfalul Zere, who apparently wrote his master's research on aid and self-reliance. Redae described how for Eritrea self-reliance was born during the liberation struggle, when both Cold War powers backed the other side. "Eritrea does not reject foreign assistance," Redae then explained. "It insists that it be genuine, that it complements national priorities. Aid should be time-bound. It should not create structural dependency."

He paused before adding something that stayed with me long after the panel ended: "Development partners should work with her, not for her."

Listening, I thought about how this idea — so clear when voiced by Eritreans themselves — has been caricatured for decades. In donor reports, "self-reliance" was often treated as a polite word for Eritrean stubbornness, arrogance, exceptionalism, or isolationism. Yet what Eritreans have always insisted on, at great cost, is the right to define their own path to development.

As Redae tried to explain, however, self-reliance is not a rejection of partnership. It is a rejection of the kind of partnership that demands hierarchy, dependence, and quiet submission.

In this context, we must also remember that Eritrea's approach is not an anomaly. It is an echo. Across post-independence Africa, similar stories abound. From Tanzania's ujamaa to Ghana's early experiments in self-determination, self-reliant development once defined a generation. What changed was not the idea but politics. The Cold War punished those who stood alone and rewarded those who did not.

And yet, here was Eritrea, unyielding and still standing. It reminded the continent what that confidence once looked like. That same proud spirit seemed to echo through the room that evening.

The discussion then moved from history to practice, from philosophy to what genuine partnership might look like in real terms.

Dr. Caroline Mwongera, the UN Country Director for IFAD, said something that, to many in the room, felt almost radical in its simplicity. "It's not a question of self-reliance or multilateral cooperation," she explained. "They are mutually reinforcing." She went on to describe how the UN's role in Eritrea is not to set the agenda but to "align with the government's priorities, provide technology and innovation, and complement what already exists."

It was refreshing to hear, and, if we are honest, unusual. Because that is not how development partners have often operated in Africa. Too often, the word partnership has been used to disguise imbalance. In Ghana, donor-driven reforms in the 1990s dictated how and where public funds could be spent, often prioritizing fiscal targets over social investment. In Malawi, agricultural subsidies were once dismantled under external pressure, only to be reinstated later after devastating food shortages. In Tanzania, community-based programs have frequently been reshaped to fit donor reporting templates rather than local realities. And in places like the DRC or South Sudan, international missions have poured in with good intentions but left behind a patchwork of fragmented initiatives with little local ownership.

Across the continent, aid has too often come tied to a belief that Africans must be guided toward progress, not trusted to define it.

That is why what is happening in Eritrea feels different.

The UN Country Team, under the leadership of Nahla Valji, is charting a path that breaks from old habits. Her approach has introduced a tone of humility, listening, and respect that many institutions speak of but rarely embody. What she and her team are building in Eritrea is not just a country model; it's a quiet blueprint for how the UN can engage across Africa — grounded in equality rather than hierarchy.

By creating a UN platform for Eritreans to define their own priorities and perspectives, Nahla and her team are proving that cooperation works best when it begins with respect and trust instead of control. It is an approach that deserves to be amplified and replicated across all UN Country Teams on the continent.

If more partners embraced this posture — to listen before prescribing, to collaborate instead of correct — Africa's relationship with development could finally begin to transform in real, lasting ways.

As the discussion deepened, the room felt charged. You could sense people thinking, weighing old assumptions against what they were hearing. Perhaps it was that spirit of humility of the panel that encouraged honesty from the audience.

When the moderator invited reflections, Dr. Eden Tareke, a prominent Eritrean researcher in biochemistry and toxicology, stood up and asked why it seems like the aid industry continues to thrive on the very problems it was meant to end, instead of designing its own redundancy. Her words hung in the air.

Her question was more than a critique of aid. It was a call to rethink what development really means and what it ought to look like. What if progress were measured not by how much assistance a country receives, but by what it does with what it receives, and perhaps more importantly, by how much it can do without it? Maybe what she meant was that real change threatens too many comfortable arrangements, that dependency is not an accident but a system carefully maintained.

Other participants spoke candidly about the trade-offs and difficulties of building from within. But they also reminded us that resilience built on national ownership lasts longer than progress funded by external approval.

Imagine a future where international institutions come not to teach, but to learn; not to design, but to co-create. Imagine if we measured progress not by how many projects are launched, but by how many are led and sustained by local hands.

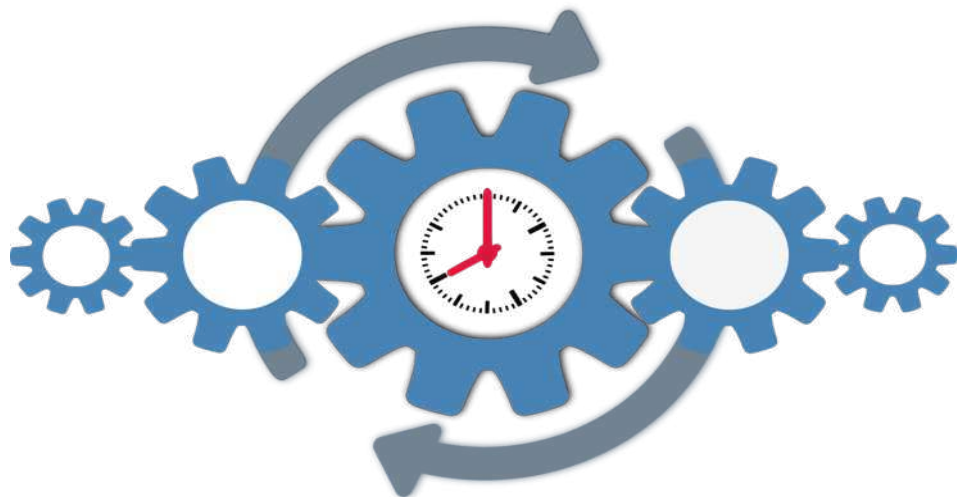
Eritrea's story offers a glimpse of that future. It shows that self-reliance and partnership are not opposites, but allies, and that dignity and cooperation can coexist if we start from equality, not hierarchy.

As I left the hall that evening, the air outside felt charged with possibility. For the first time in a long while, I thought: maybe the world is beginning to listen. And maybe, if that continues, Africa will not just be spoken about. It will be heard.

“The UN Country Team, under the leadership of Nahla Valji, is charting a path that breaks from old habits. Her approach has introduced a tone of humility, listening, and respect that many institutions speak of but rarely embody. What she and her team are building in Eritrea is not just a country model; it's a quiet blueprint for how the UN can engage across Africa — grounded in equality rather than hierarchy.”

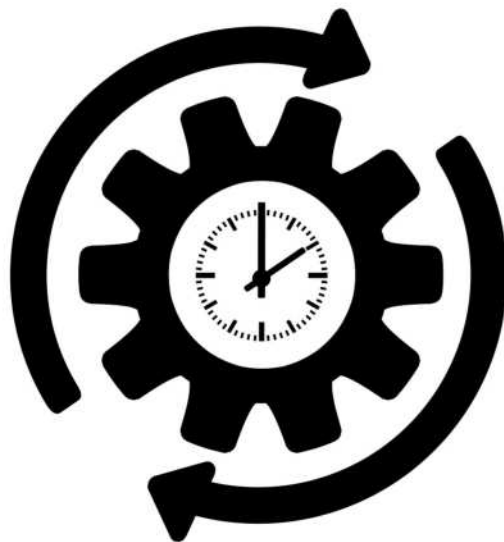


Coffee Time

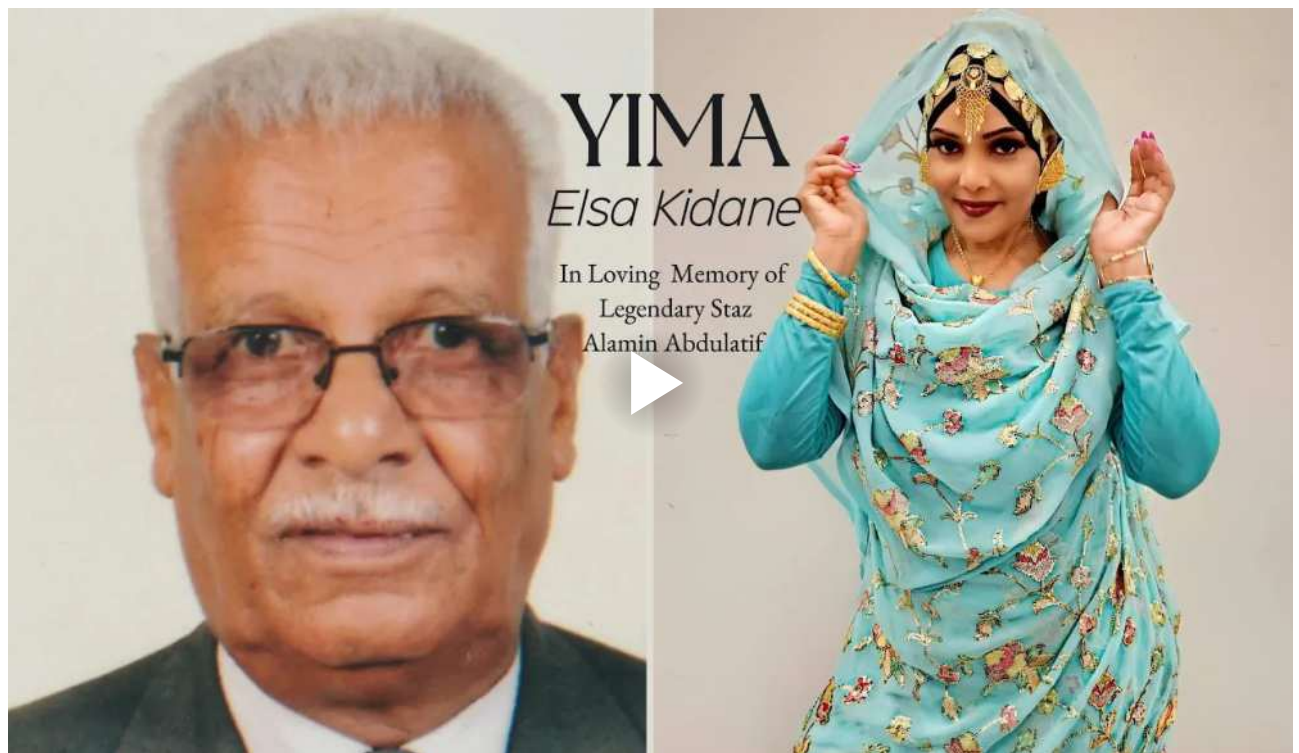




Music Time



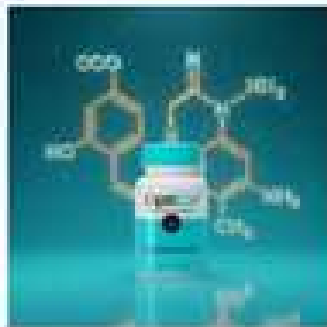




new



Heart Health



Glucose Balance



Joint Health



GET READY TO *love* WHAT YOU *sea*



ALL YOUR WORRIES
washed **AWAY.**

Shop Now

RedSeaBeauty.com

[Instagram.com/RedSeaBeauty](https://www.instagram.com/RedSeaBeauty)





Tewelde's
FAMILY MARKET



Elsa's Place Bed & Breakfast

296 likes • 986 followers



ERITREAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

EST. 1976



Commentary

The Red Sea Gambit: Eritrea's Rise and the Battle for the Horn's Future

Girmay Haile



A strategic map of Eritrea and the Red Sea corridor,

The Resurgence of an Imperial Ghost

The political landscape of the Horn of Africa was jolted in late 2023 by the resurgence of a decades-old ambition emanating from Addis Ababa. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government began a concerted campaign, articulating what it framed as Ethiopia's historical and economic entitlement to sovereign access on the Red Sea (Abiy Ahmed, Address to Parliament, October 2023). This rhetoric, presented as a national imperative for a landlocked state, was not a novel diplomatic position but the latest activation of a persistent imperial ghost—a claim that has been used to mobilize for conflict and internal consolidation for over a century.

To analyze this claim through the lens of Addis Ababa's narrative is to misunderstand it entirely. This three-part article posits that Ethiopia's pursuit of the Red Sea is a political instrument, strategically deployed at a moment of profound internal fragmentation (International Crisis Group, *The Red Sea Rising: Ethiopia's Port Push and Regional Rivalry*, 2024). It is a diversionary tactic, built upon a carefully curated but fundamentally flawed historical narrative, and it exists in direct violation of the modern legal principles that uphold African sovereignty (African Union, Constitutive Act, Article 4(b)). Furthermore, this belligerence has catalyzed a fundamental regional realignment, inadvertently elevating Eritrea from a nation under constant threat to the pivotal, indispensable power in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea basin. Asmara's strategic response, rooted in sovereign integrity and military deterrence, has made it the linchpin of a new counter-hegemonic bloc that stretches from the Nile to the Gulf of Aden, permanently altering the Horn's geopolitical calculus.

Part I: The Anatomy of a Fallacy—Deconstructing the Ethiopian Claim

A. The Fabricated Historical Pedigree

The cornerstone of Ethiopia's claim is the invocation of the Axumite Kingdom as a direct and sole predecessor state. This is a profound historical manipulation. The Axumite Kingdom was a shared civilization of the region, a nexus of African and Semitic cultures that encompassed territories in modern-day Sudan, Eritrea, parts of northern Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia), and Yemen (Munro-Hay, *Aksum: An African Civilization of Late Antiquity*, 1991) and far from being a state. Its impressive achievements were built upon even earlier indigenous civilizations, including the Belew-Kelew, D'mit (Da'amat), Punt, and the vibrant port city state of Adulis, located squarely in modern-day Eritrea (Connah, *African Civilizations: An Archaeological Perspective*, 2001). The modern Ethiopian state's attempt to claim Axum as its exclusive inheritance is an anachronistic political project, designed to construct a national mythos of perpetual coastal dominion that simply did not exist.

A clear-eyed examination of the subsequent centuries further dismantles this narrative. The Abyssinian Empire's forays towards the coast in the 19th century were fleeting and militarily focused, never resulting in the stable administration or development of the Red Sea coastline (Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855–1991*, 2001). For over 400 years, this coast was under the firm control of the Ottoman Empire, followed by a period of Egyptian rule before a complete colonial control was established by Italy on the southern Red Sea coast (Erich, *The Cross and the River: Ethiopia, Egypt, and the Nile*, 2002). Therefore, the notion of a European colonial conspiracy to severing a pre-existing Abyssinian/Ethiopian coastal state is a deliberate desire by Ethiopian rulers to create a convenient fiction.

Indeed, Emperor Menelik II, following his historic victory at Adwa in 1896, made a calculated strategic choice: he prioritized the conquest and incorporation of the fertile lands to the south, which would become the core of modern Ethiopia's territory, over a costly and uncertain push to the sea (Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 1994).

The period from 1952 to 1991, when Ethiopia exercised control over the Eritrean ports of Massawa and Assab, is the most emotionally charged and deliberately misrepresented chapter. This control did not arise from a natural or historical right. It began with an UN-mandated federation that explicitly linked the autonomous state of Eritrea to the Sovereign Ethiopian Crown (under Emperor Haile Selassie), and not with the Ethiopian government (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 390 A(V), 1950). The emperor's illegal dissolution of the Eritrean parliament and full annexation in 1962 was a brutal act that violated the UN Resolution 390 A(V), international law and extinguished Eritrean autonomy. This justified the armed struggle Eritreans started in 1961, a year before the annulment of the federal arrangement and annexation of Eritrea by the Ethiopian Emperor. The Eritrea war of independence lasted for 30 years (Iyob, *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: Domination, Resistance, Nationalism, 1941-1993*, 1995).

The Red Sea Gambit:...

Therefore, Ethiopia's subsequent loss of the coastline in 1991, after being defeated by the Eritrean People's Liberation Army (EPLA of EPLF), was not a colonial amputation but the direct result of a successful liberation struggle, culminating in a UN-supervised referendum in 1993 where the Eritrean people overwhelmingly affirmed their sovereignty—the final, lawful chapter in the long process of decolonization (UN Observer Mission for the Eritrean Referendum, Report of the Secretary-General, 1993).

B. The Legal and Moral Vacuum

In the context of contemporary international law, Ethiopia's claim is not merely weak; it is non-existent. The very foundation of the post-colonial African order rests on two sacrosanct principles: 'uti possidetis juris,' which sanctifies the inherited colonial borders as the borders of modern states, and the right to self-determination (Organization of African Unity, Cairo Declaration, 1964). Eritrea's sovereignty, born from this process, is universally recognized by the United Nations, the African Union, and is explicitly accepted by the government of Ethiopia for over three decades to date. To now speak of a "right" to another nation's territory is to advocate for a revisionist and illegal doctrine that threatens the stability of every state on the continent.

This legal void forces a critical question: what is the true motive for resurrecting this claim now? The answer lies not in foreign policy, but in the internal disintegration of the Ethiopian state. The country is reeling from an atrocious war in Tigray that may have claimed over two million lives (EFSDC, *The Destruction of Tigray: A Comprehensive Analysis*, 2023), with catastrophic conflicts now raging in Amhara and Oromia. Its economy is in freefall, with close to 90% of the population facing severe food insecurity (World Bank, *Ethiopia Economic Update*, 2024). For a regime presiding over this collapse, the "Red Sea threat" is a classic and desperate tool of diversionary politics—an attempt to manufacture a national crisis to unite a fractured populace against an external enemy, thereby diverting attention from catastrophic governance failures and internal ethnic strife (Tronvoll, K. *The Ethiopia-Eritrea Nexus: From War to Peace and Back Again?* 2024).

Crucially, this is not a unified Ethiopian national project. The current regime is dominated by an Oromo elite that has itself promoted a "Kush Empire" ideology, a vision of historical dominion stretching from the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean (Jalata, *Cultural Capital and the Crisis of Identity: The Oromo National Movement in Ethiopia*, 2023). This reveals the port ambition not as a pan-Ethiopian cause, but as a sub-national, ethno-centric agenda of the ruling clique. It is precisely why the claim fails to resonate with other major ethnic groups like the Amharas, Tigrayans, and Somalis, who rightly see it as a dangerous gambit that exacerbates their own immediate struggles for survival and political representation.

The Red Sea Gambit...

C. The Deliberate Deception of "Access" versus "Annexation"

The Abiy government's strategy relies on a deliberate and cynical manipulation of language, a diplomatic sleight of hand designed to mislead different audiences. In English, for international consumption, Ethiopian officials speak of "peaceful access" and "dialogue," terms that align with the rights of landlocked states under international law (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Part X). However, in Amharic and other local languages, the rhetoric from military commanders and affiliated media is starkly different, featuring overt threats, declarations of taking what is "rightfully ours," and promises to secure a port "by any means necessary" (Amharic-language speeches by senior Ethiopian officials, compiled by the Eritrean Ministry of Information, 2023–2024). This bilingual duplicity is a calculated strategy to placate the international community while simultaneously inflaming nationalist and expansionist passions at home. The core of the deception is the intentional conflation of the lawful concept of "access" with the illegal act of "annexation."

Part II: The Architecture of Inaction—Regional and International Recalibration

The muted response from the broader international community to Ethiopia's overt threats is not an endorsement of its position, but a reflection of a cynical and fragmented global order where strategic interests consistently trump the defence of sovereignty, justice, and equality of nations under international law.

The United States, the historical architect of the failed "anchor state" policy in the Horn of Africa, finds itself paralyzed by the consequences of its own past actions. For decades, Washington anointed Ethiopia as its primary regional partner, channelling billions of dollars in aid and military support while wilfully ignoring its internal repressions and its acts of aggression against Eritrea (Harry Verhoeven & Michael Woldemariam -2022: Who lost Ethiopia? The unmaking of an African anchor state and U.S. foreign policy, Contemporary Security Policy). This policy reached its moral and strategic nadir in 2002 when the U.S., along with the international community, stood passively by as Ethiopia rejected the "final and binding" ruling of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission - EEBC (EEBC, Decision Regarding Delimitation of the Border, 2002). This was not a mere diplomatic failure; it was a catastrophic abdication that taught the region a brutal lesson: international law was malleable, and the sovereignty of smaller nations was negotiable when it conflicted with the interests of powerful states and their chosen proxies.

This history has left Washington strategically neutered. It is unable to condone Ethiopia's threats without betraying its own stated principles, unwilling to impose meaningful sanctions for fear of triggering a total state collapse—the "too big to fail" dilemma—and utterly incapable of engaging Eritrea as a constructive partner after decades of hostility and isolation (Magu, S. US Foreign Policy in the Horn of Africa: From Realism to Reversal, 2023). The result is a policy of impotence, reduced to issuing weak diplomatic statements urging "restraint" while the architecture of its regional strategy lies in ruins.

This Western paralysis is compounded by the active engagement of other global powers, each with its own agenda. China, with massive infrastructure investments in Ethiopia under its Belt and Road Initiative, would inevitably veto any UN Security Council sanctions to protect its economic stakes (China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China's Policy Paper on Africa, 2021). Russia, seeking to expand its global influence, is actively courting the Abiy government, offering diplomatic cover and military partnerships without political conditions, positioning itself as a counter to Western "interference" (Russia-Africa Summit, Joint Declaration, 2023). Meanwhile, Middle Eastern powers, particularly the United Arab Emirates (UAE), are playing a complex and often destructive game. The UAE's "unholy alliance" with Ethiopia is driven by its desire to secure port access and vast agricultural land for its own food security, using Ethiopia as a proxy to advance its interests in Somalia (through the Somaliland gambit) and to pressure Eritrea for concessions on Assab (International Crisis Group, The Gulf's Scramble for Africa, 2023).

Part III: The Asmara Doctrine—Eritrea's Strategic Ascendancy

A. The Primacy of Strategic Sovereignty

In a region often characterized by clientelism, Eritrea's fierce commitment to non-alignment is its greatest strength. It is not beholden to any single external patron—be it the U.S., China, or Russia. This allows Asmara to form flexible, tactical alliances based solely on a cold-eyed calculation of its own national interest, making it an unpredictable and crucial independent actor that all others must court or contend with (Tedesros, F. Eritrea's Foreign Policy: The Logic of Self-Reliance, Journal of Modern African Studies, 2022).

B. The Credibility of Military Deterrence

Eritrea maintains a large, battle-hardened military in a permanent state of readiness, forged in a three-decade struggle for independence. This is not an offensive force, but a profoundly credible deterrent. It makes the cost of any military aggression by Ethiopia prohibitively high, forming the unshakeable bedrock of its national security and granting it immense strategic leverage (International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 2024).

C. Command of the Maritime Crossroads

Eritrea's geography is its geopolitical destiny. Its sovereign control over the strategic Dahlak Archipelago and its commanding position over the Bab el-Mandeb Strait—a vital chokepoint for global shipping—grants it a vital role in international maritime security (Chalk, P. The Bab el-Mandeb: A Maritime Chokepoint of Global Significance, RAND Corporation, 2023). This is not just a military asset; it is the gateway to the \$4 trillion Blue Economy, a source of immense future economic power that far surpasses the landlocked dilemmas of its rivals (World Bank, The Potential of the Blue Economy, 2017).

Eritrea is no longer just a player; it is the strategic nexus of a new regional order. It has moved to the centre of a network of states united by their wariness of Ethiopian and UAE dominance. This is not a random collection of allies but a deliberate architecture. Its deep, historical alliance with Somalia, rooted in shared struggles, provides a strategic partner on Ethiopia's eastern flank (Hashi, A. *The Unbreakable Bond: A History of Eritrean-Somali Relations*, 2021). Its critical security partnerships with Egypt and Saudi Arabia create a powerful northern and maritime front (Mekonnen, Y. *The Egypt-Eritrea-Saudi Axis: Reshaping Red Sea Security*, Sada Journal, Carnegie Endowment, 2024). And its long-standing ties with Sudan, deepened amidst the latter's internal conflict, secure its western border. This bloc is not merely bilateral; it represents a fundamental recalibration of power aimed at checking expansionist ambitions and enforcing a regional balance.

This pivotal status now projects Eritrea's influence beyond the Red Sea, directly into the heart of the Nile Basin geopolitics. By forming a strategic bloc with the downstream states of Egypt and Sudan, Eritrea has effectively merged the two most critical security theatres in North-East Africa (Mekonnen, Y. *The Egypt-Eritrea-Saudi Axis: Reshaping Red Sea Security*, Sada Journal, Carnegie Endowment, 2024). This creates a second, northern front of strategic pressure on Ethiopia, complicating Addis Ababa's calculus and forcing it to confront a multi-front diplomatic and security challenge. The hegemonic campaign has decisively shifted "from the Dam to the Port," and in this new, expanded arena, Eritrea is no longer a peripheral figure but an unavoidable and decisive power broker.

Part IV: Forging a Different Future—Generational Shifts and Scenarios

The burden of this complex and dangerous inheritance now falls upon the younger generations of Eritrea and Ethiopia. For the Ethiopian youth, their task is not to re-fight the battles of their grandparents but to deconstruct the nationalist myths and state propaganda they have been fed. This requires a conscious movement of critical education, seeking out alternative histories and primary sources that challenge official curricula. It demands digital literacy to identify and counter state-sponsored disinformation designed to inflame tensions. Most importantly, it requires building direct, people-to-people bridges—through social media, cultural exchange, cross-border community engagements and academic collaboration—that bypass the hostile narratives of their government.

For the Eritrean youth, it needs to be creating a broader opportunity for unity, transparency and growing regional security. They must become a collective constituency for peace, championing a future where a "Horn of Africa Youth

identity supplants tribal and ethnic nationalism, and where a shared vision for economic integration and the development of the Blue Economy replaces the zero-sum battle over territory.

The ultimate trajectory of the region, however, hinges entirely on the political evolution of Ethiopia itself. The post-Abiy era, whenever it arrives, will represent a critical juncture, presenting three starkly divergent scenarios for the future (International Crisis Group, *The Red Sea Rising: Ethiopia's Port Push and Regional Rivalry*, 2024):

I. The Collapse and Regional Contagion (The Highest Risk Scenario)

If Abiy's fall triggers a violent, unmanaged disintegration of the Ethiopian state into warring ethnic fiefdoms, the entire Horn will be consumed by a firestorm. The consequences would be catastrophic: millions of refugees flooding into Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya, and Djibouti; rampant conflict spilling across borders as militias clash; and a vast ungoverned space becoming a perfect breeding ground for terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab. In this scenario, Eritrea would have no choice but to adopt a "strong border doctrine," sealing its frontiers and engaging in decisive military strikes to protect its sovereignty from the emanating chaos.

II. The Rise of a New Hegemon (The High-Risk Continuation)

If the power vacuum in Addis Ababa is filled by another ethno-nationalist-militaristic regime, whether from a dominant ethnic faction or the federal army itself, the current cold war will simply intensify. The "port obsession" would remain a central tool for nationalist mobilization. In response, Eritrea would maintain and intensify its deterrence and alliance strategy. The existing counter-hegemonic bloc would likely formalize into a more explicit military-security pact, locking the region into a costly and protracted arms race and a permanent state of high tension.

III. The Fragile Opportunity for a Regional Reset (The Guarded Possibility)

The only path to sustainable stability is a negotiated, inclusive political transition in Ethiopia that leads to a government which acknowledges the catastrophic failure of the hegemonic model. Such a government, potentially built on a genuine federal compact or confederation, would renounce expansionism, and prioritize internal stability and good-neighbourly relations out of sheer necessity. This is the only scenario that would allow Eritrea to fundamentally shift its role from a pivotal deterrent to a pivotal partner for development. It would enable Asmara to demobilize parts of its military, focus on its own economic development, and engage as a respected stakeholder in regional forums focused on shared infrastructure, trade corridors, and collective security. It would avert the collapse of the Ethiopian state and unlock the immense potential of the region.

The Indispensable Nation

The Red Sea gambit is a high-stake confrontation where the first casualty has been the truth. Ethiopia's claim is exposed as a dangerous political diversion, a phantom limb of a lost empire invoked to salvage a regime drowning in its own domestic failures. In response, Eritrea, through strategic clarity, military preparedness, and diplomatic acumen, has cemented its role as the indispensable nation in the Horn of Africa's geopolitical equilibrium. Therefore, the future of this volatile region is no longer a story dictated solely from the halls of power in Addis Ababa (Arat Kilo). It is now a narrative being shaped, decisively, from Asmara, in concert with a coalition of regional powers who have staked their security on a simple, non-negotiable principle: that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations is the only legitimate foundation upon which lasting peace and prosperity can be built. The world must look past the noise of Ethiopian propaganda and vintage ambitions of regional imperial hegemony to recognize this new, decisive reality. The stability of the Red Sea and the Horn depend on it.

From Highlands to Horizons

A Five-Day Trek - tracing Robert Napier's Expedition (1867-68) (Senafe - Zula)

Part II of IV

Mengi Samuel

4Day 2: The First Settled Village, Geredef

After yesterday's epic trek, waking up felt like being pried from a cozy cocoon—only to discover that our muscles had staged a rebellion overnight. JimiE, our ever-persistent young guide, was already busy preparing breakfast, but we were so drained that even the thought of chewing felt like a Herculean task. So, we opted for a simple cup of tea instead—because who needs solid food when you can sip your way to recovery?

Once we were somewhat caffeinated, JimiE hatched a clever plan: he suggested that the two elders start walking. At the same time, he and our sprightly younger companion loaded our gear onto the camel. This way, we'd get a ten-minute head start—because, let's face it, those elders could probably outrun us on a good day.

Twenty minutes later, we heard the unmistakable sound of their footsteps closing in on us, like a scene from a slow-motion chase in a comedy film. They caught up, and we all trudged towards Geredef village together. Our pace was more akin to that of a defeated, tired soldier dragging his bayonet through the mud than a group of enthusiastic hikers. The 10.17 km felt like a marathon, taking us a solid three and a half hours.

Finally, we reached Geredef, perched on the edge of a mountain beside the mighty Nabagede River. The village administrator's house loomed in the distance, looking as far away as the moon—seriously, did they have a space program we didn't know about? But with determination (and a lot of dragging our walking sticks), we made it.



Upon our arrival, we were warmly welcomed by the village administrator and a few elders, who guided us to a Hidmo, where a proper mat awaited our weary bodies. They offered us water to wash our feet—thank goodness, because they were starting to smell like they'd been on their little adventure—and a refreshing drink of BiraH (ብራዝ) (buttermilk).

An hour later, lunch arrived, and oh boy, was it worth the wait! We were treated to one of Saho's specialties: MuKbaza, a delightful concoction of honey mixed with goat butter, served with Himbasha bread for dipping, followed by traditional coffee. It was the kind of meal that made you forget your aching muscles and remember why you loved food in the first place. All this was during a Holy Ramadan fast. Our hosts, being Muslim, were fasting while they prepared food for us.

As we approached the Hidmo, we were greeted by the first sign of civilization: our mobile phones finally connected to the cell network! It was like finding an oasis in the desert—only instead of water, we were quenching our thirst for communication. The first call came from my wife, who had been dialing in like a contestant on a game show, eager to know if we were still alive and not lost in the wilderness. Spoiler alert: we were safe and sound! Wedi Shiker and Mahmud Yacub also chimed in, checking on our well-being. Naturally, we couldn't resist the urge to call our friends and boast about our grand adventure. After all, who wouldn't want to hear about our heroic trek through the wild?

From Highlands to Horizons

As Mahmud Yacub wisely suggested (and our sore muscles confirmed), we decided to take a day to recover. After a few hours of rest post-lunch, we were visited by numerous villagers who came to chat about their lives on the escarpment, where the only road connection to major towns is more of a suggestion than a reality. We also asked if they had heard of the Napier Expedition that marched through their area in 1868. To our surprise, they looked at us as if we had just asked if they knew the latest TikTok dance. The expedition involving 13,000 British and Indian soldiers, 26,000 supporters, about 35,000 animals, and 44 elephants didn't quite make it into local lore. You'd think with that many elephants, there would be at least one story about a runaway trunk!

We were baffled that such a monumental event had slipped through the cracks of history. I mean, with the head of the expedition in Senafe and the tail end somewhere near Zula, the Nabagade River must have been a veritable stampede of soldiers and elephants. You'd expect tales of epic encounters to be passed down through generations, but instead, we found ourselves in a historical black hole. One possible explanation? The area was as empty as my fridge after a late-night snack binge—no Geredef, NereE, or Salima villages in sight to witness the spectacle.

As evening fell, Mahmud Ismael and his fellow village committee members decided to treat us to a goat feast. They slaughtered a goat, and his wife whipped up a dinner that made me feel like I was experiencing lean meat for the first time. The village of Geredef is part of the NereE administrative area, which encompasses many families across the mountainous escarpment. We learned there are about 650 households—roughly 2,600 individuals if you do the math (and I'm still recovering from my last math test).

The Nabagade River near Geredef is impressively wide, and the community boasts about 25 hectares of well-organized farm paddies. You could see the dedication of the villagers in maintaining their farm fields, which are irrigated by spate irrigation. Most of their fields are densely seeded with corn, chosen for its essential role in livestock feed.

Thanks to their farming prowess, Geredef is blessed with a diverse range of livestock, including cattle, camels, goats, sheep, and chickens. Unlike their neighbors in Salima, who seem to be on a strict goat-only farm, Geredef has a veritable petting zoo going on! Who knew that a little village could pack such a punch in the livestock department? Only if the village has a car road to the market.



The only remnant of the expedition we found was the burial site of one colonel and five unnamed souls. The elders did mention that the trail in Morgolo Mountain is called “Tsirgia Feres” or “Mengedi Tilian” (Horse Road or Italian Road). Morgolo Mountain loomed ahead, a massive challenge for the next day, and I couldn't help but wonder if we'd need a map, a compass, and perhaps a Sherpa.

From Highlands to Horizons

Its isolation presents one major challenge: aside from a foot doctor who specializes in treating malaria, the area lacks any real clinic. The local administrator grimly informed us that they've lost 40 women in labor over the last seven years. That's a statistic that puts things into perspective—talk about a rough delivery!

After a day of rest in Geredef and a fabulous meal that could make even a Michelin-star chef weep with envy, we felt rejuvenated and ready to tackle our third-day journey. We decided to add one more camel to our caravan, just in case we needed a backup plan—because you never know when you might need a four-legged friend to carry your snacks or, you know, you!

A huge shoutout to the generous hospitality of Geredef, especially to Mahmud Ismael, the head of the village committee, and his wife, who treated us like royalty. I half-expected them to present us with crowns and scepters!



An hour into the trek, we found ourselves at the base of the mountain, staring up at the trail locals call Tsrigia Feres. We started our ascent, which felt more like a cardio workout than a leg day at the gym. We climbed for 15 minutes and then took a well-deserved five-minute break. Our hearts were pounding like a steam engine, and I half-expected to see smoke billowing from our ears! The climb seemed never-ending, and let me tell you, camels were not designed for this kind of cardio. The two camels struggled to navigate the narrow passes, looking more like they were auditioning for a circus act than helping us on our journey.



5. Day 3: The Beastly Mountain of Morgolo and Salima Village

The next morning, Mahmoud Ismael and his trusty companions, Abdu Omer and Abdela Suleman (a.k.a. the “Anebaberti Adi” crew), decided to join us on our third-day adventure. This time, we waved goodbye to the Nabagede River and set our sights on the mighty Morgolo Mountain.

To my surprise, our 82-year-old companion, Kidane, was outpacing me on the climb. I was starting to wonder if he had a secret stash of energy drinks hidden in his backpack! After three grueling hours, we finally reached the summit and decided it was time for a lunch break. I could practically hear my legs sighing in relief.

From Highlands to Horizons



After a two-hour lunch rest (because who doesn't need a food coma after a climb?), we began our descent. The summit of the mountain marks the end of the Southern Administration Zone and the beginning of the Northern Red Sea Administration Zone. Descending was just as challenging, if not more so, than the climb. My knees were starting to protest louder than a toddler denied dessert, and that's when Kidane began to experience knee problems of his own.

It took us about two hours to reach the Salima River, and after an hour of walking along its banks, we finally arrived at the small village of Salima. I was ready to celebrate our survival with a cold drink and a comfy chair—if only we could find one!

The Salima village administrators were expecting us, which was a pleasant surprise considering they don't have cell phone reception. I'm not sure how they managed to get the word out—maybe they have a secret carrier pigeon network or a highly skilled team of gossiping goats. Whatever the method, it worked!

Upon our arrival, the Salima villagers had rolled out the red carpet—or rather, a proper mat—for us to rest on. They even provided water to soak our weary feet, which felt like a spa day after our travels. And then came the coffee. Oh boy, that coffee was excellent! Maybe it was because we were in dire need of caffeine, or perhaps it was brewed with a touch of village magic. Either way, it was a game-changer.

Two hours later, in a gesture of hospitality that could rival a royal feast, they slaughtered a goat in our honor. Yes, you heard that right—a goat! Dinner was a delightful affair, and the goat meat was simply divine.

As we settled in, discussions turned to the Napier expedition, which, to our surprise, they had no clue about. We also touched on the state of their school, which could use a lot of support. Salih Idris, the director of the only elementary school in the village, is quite the hero, juggling the education of 110 students with just one other teacher. Talk about a heavy workload!





DEXTER'S STORY



An Ode to Bereket Mengistaeb: The Echo of Guayla

Dr. Dexter Story

On November 12, 2025, the northeast African music diaspora pauses, and a deep mournful silence falls over the Horn of Africa. The passing of the great freedom fighter Dr. Bereket Mengistaeb—the very heart and soul of Tigrinya music, the “Guayla King”—strikes a chord of profound sorrow, yet simultaneously ignites an unquenchable fire of admiration.

I sat down to write with all the deference I could muster as a non-Eritrean. This moment of reflection is not a mere recounting of dates and deeds; his biography is public record. This is a personal lament, a heartfelt promise from one who has dedicated their academic life to the very sounds they pioneered.

Dr. Bereket Mengistaeb, your krar was not just an instrument; it was the voice of a people, a heartbeat of revolution, and the intoxicating call to the guayla dance floor. Your voice and lyrics uttered the inner sentiment of determination and deliverance. My love for that music—that communal, ecstatic, pulsing, foot-raising joy—is inextricably linked to your genius. Your music is the pure, unfiltered echo of Eritrea’s soul, bouncing between the mountains and the diaspora.

The Regret and the Resolution

I carry a deep and abiding regret: that I never had the chance to sit across from you. I wanted to discuss the very fabric of my doctoral dissertation, to trace the lineage of your melodies, to understand how your life intertwined with the arc of the revolution—from the stages of Addis Ababa to the mountains of the Eritrean Liberation Front. That conversation—about the history you lived and the music you shaped—is a profound loss, a silence that will now forever hang in the air. I discovered your music in the U.S., but realized what you represent while in Asmara. Your people made me understand. I came so close to meeting you, yet so far.

That failed encounter transforms today into a solemn resolution.

A commitment to Legacy: I promise, now, to redouble my efforts to ensure your work is not just remembered, but studied, celebrated, and published. I intend to shed light on your monumental musical contributions.

Honoring the Remaining Legends: Your passing is a stark reminder of the urgency. I renew my commitment to interviewing remaining legends of Tigrinya music and dance—the custodians of this vibrant culture—to preserve their stories before their voices, too, fall silent.

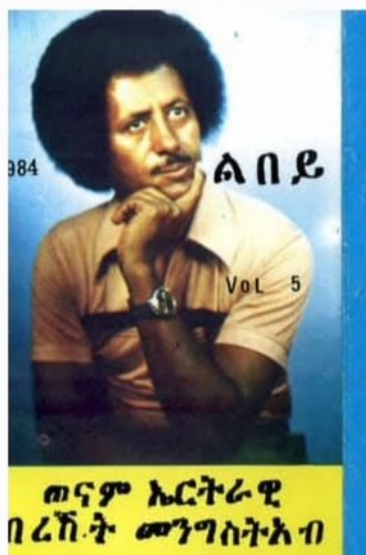
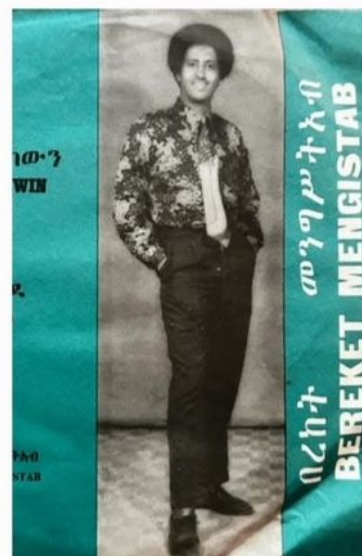
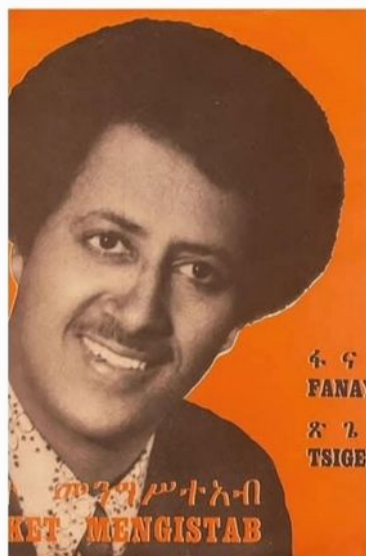
Posthumous Flowers Through Sound.

I never had the privilege of witnessing the electricity of your live performance, of being swept up in the magnetic force of Megaleh Guayla (Echo of the Dance). That, too, is a regret I must carry.

But now, the work begins. Today, we grant you your posthumous flowers not with silence, but with immersion. I will do a close listening to every recorded note, close observation of every video clip, and close reading of every article written about you. We will hear not just the melody, but the history; we will see not just the performance, but the profound cultural significance you imbued into every strum.

Bereket Mengistaeb, Bshimkum (In Your Name), your legacy is secured. The krar may be resting, but the guayla will never stop. Your echo lives in every dancer’s step and every listener’s heart.

Salute to the Legend.





 Mesob Store









\$ 15

OFF

on orders of \$259+

\$ 5

OFF

on orders of \$300+

\$ 65

OFF

on orders of \$1000+

Mesob Store

mesobstore.com



🌟 Welcome to Mesob Store! 🌟

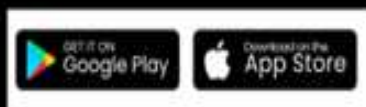
First time here? We're thrilled to have you! 🎉 To celebrate your first visit, we're offering you an exclusive **[10\$] OFF** your first purchase. Whether you're looking for buying to your family back home/ buying for yourself, now's the perfect time to try us out.

🛒 Use Code: WELCOME at checkout

But hurry—this offer won't last forever! Dive in and experience the Mesob Store difference today.

Shop Now and enjoy the savings!

Offer valid for first-time customers only. Terms and conditions apply.



*Book Reviews
&
Upcoming books*



A BOOK REVIEW

Kiflai Gebremedhin*, Ph.D.
kkg1@cornell.edu

Tesfai Keleta Demas's (tegadalay) book, *Research Methodology and Important Studies* (Sne Agebab Mirmir Agedesti Mesnaetitn), written in Tigrinya, is an ambitious and valuable contribution to scholarship in Eritrea. The work is structured into three major sections: (1) research methodology, (2) Eritrea from the era of Bahri Negassi to the advent of Italian colonization, and (3) studies of selected units (Ahadutat) of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) during the armed struggle. A fourth section provides an extensive bibliography, enriching the book's overall scope. While the topics may at first seem disparate, a closer reading reveals their organic connection, with the second and third sections as well as the bibliography serving as essential complements and resources to the central theme of research methodology.

The first and principal section offers a comprehensive explanation of the concepts and practices of scientific research. It guides readers through key stages: formulating research questions, initiating inquiry, reviewing existing literature, collecting and verifying data, and ensuring data authenticity and credibility. What distinguishes the book is its blend of theory with practical examples drawn from the author's own experiences, making the content not only instructive but also grounded and relatable.

The author's stated goals are to foster a culture of research, especially among the youth, and to encourage critical inquiry in all areas of life and professional practice. In doing so, the book also calls attention to the shortcomings commonly found in works by Eritrean writers, both novice and experienced, including inadequate data collection, poor citation practices, and failure to assess the reliability of data and information. By addressing these gaps, Tesfai provides both critique and remedy, offering clear guidance on the foundations of sound research practices.

The book emphasizes that research begins with identifying a straightforward question, followed by a review of previous studies. From there, it proceeds through data collection, whether via fieldwork, experiments, interviews, or archival sources, before moving on to analysis, interpretation, and the drawing of conclusions. The clarity with which these steps are presented makes the book particularly accessible for novice researchers. This accessibility reflects the author's own rigorous preparation, which included wide reading, interviews, and consultations with seasoned scholars.

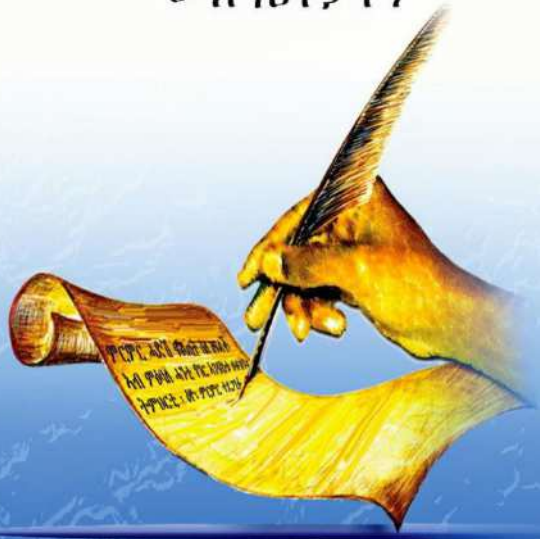
The second section situates Eritrea, the Red Sea State, and its people within historical research, beginning with accounts by 16th-century foreign travelers to the region and extending through the Italian colonial period, when Italian officials and scholars, as well as other foreign observers, produced studies of the region. This section challenges the assumption that Eritrea's history and the history of the region's people began with Italian colonization, reminding readers that, long before modern statehood, communities and local governance structures shaped the region's past. The author's implicit message is that, although Eritrea as we know it today is a nineteenth-century creation, much like other African nations, its people, communities, and local systems of governance existed long before the arrival of colonial powers.

The third section examines the EPLF's educational and research activities during the armed struggle. Each unit of the Front maintained an Education and Studies department that developed strategies to carry out its activities and responsibilities. The book provides detailed case studies, supported by several illustrative pictures, of three such units, along with more general insights into others. These studies serve as an essential resource for future scholarship, highlighting the intellectual and organizational dimensions of Eritrea's liberation movement.

In sum, Tesfai Keleta's book makes multiple contributions: it provides a practical guide to research methodology, critiques and addresses common weaknesses in Eritrean scholarship, expands historical understanding of Eritrea before and during Italian colonization, and preserves valuable documentation of the intellectual efforts within the EPLF's units. Written in accessible Tigrigna and informed by both scholarship and experience, it is a timely and significant work that will serve, particularly novice researchers, teachers, students, and anyone interested in conducting research and teaching research methodology.

Kiflai Gebremedhin, Ph.D.
ASABE Fellow and International Professor Emeritus
Biological and Environmental Engineering
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850 USA

ስነ - አገባብ ምርምርን አገደስቲ መጽናዕታትን



ተስፋይ ቀለታ ደምሳሰ



እዚ መጽሓፍ ዜ፡ ኣብ ርእሲ ካልኣይኡ ኣቲ ንፈለግ ዝኖርብ ዘለ፡ ኣውራጅ ኣብ ኣዋን ገድሊ ናይ ዝተካየደ ምርምራትን ውጽኢቱን ዝርዝር ሓበሬታ፡ ፍሉይ ኣገዳስቲ ሂሳብ ስለ፡ እዚ ኮሎ፡ ብተገባኡ ንኣደስቲ ኤርትራውያን ተመራመርቲ ዘበድ፡ መደባት ምርምር ንክውጥኑን ዘበሊ ምርምር ንክምህሉን መዘገብን ይራኽብ ክኸውን ዝገበረ እዩ፡ ብርሃኡ፡ ብዘዘሓት ምስ ዝገበዩ ኣብ ክሉ ዓውድታት፡ ይወሰድን እስከ ምርምር ንክወጥድ ዝከፍገዝ ኣገዳሲ መጽሓፍ እዩ፡

ዘምህረት ነጥብ
ኮፍሊ ምርምርን ሰነድን



እዛ ኣገዳሳት መጽናዕትን ምርምርን፡ ኣጠቓቕመኡምን ኣትገልጽ መጽሓፍን ንደመርታን ምክራትን ተመራመርቲ፡ እዚያ ጠቓሚነት ኣያ፡ ታሪኽ ኣጽምምራን ምዕላን ዝተፋለፉ ኣሃዱታት ህዝባዊ ጥንባርን ከፍኡውን ካልእ ክፋል ታሪኽ ኤርትራ ሓዛ ስለ ዘላ፡ ብዘከበረ ዝበል ክፋል ሕብረተሰብና ተገብሮ፡ ይገብራ፡

ፕሮፌሰር ንብረብርሃን ዕቅባዊ

እዛ “ስነ-አገባብ ምርምርን ኣገደስቲ መጽናዕታትን” ኣትብል መጽሓፍ፡ ኣጼሓሕፈኣ ለዙዩ ቅድም ተኸተል ንጽፉ፡ ብዘዋገን ነገራ ዝኖሩሉሉትን ብመወሰኑ ዝኖሩሉሉ ነፍሳት መን፡ ነፍሳት ርኽቢያ፡ ቅድሚ ምርምር ምክያድ ክትገብሩ ዘለዎ መጽሓፍ ይ።

ኮፍሊ ንብረብርሃን
ኣዘንጋዊ ፕሮፌሰር ጽሑፍን ኣኮኮሲዊ ምክንያትን
የዘርኢቲ ክርኢ ሕ.መ.ኣ.

እዛ መጽሓፍ ስነ-አገባብ ምርምር ሞሪዶ ኣዳጎትን ኣተምርቲ፡ ገድሊ ኤርትራ ነቐም ናብ ናጽነት ክበጽሕ ዘገኘልዎ ምስጢራት ብዘደንቅ ጥበብ ኣስፈራቶ ኣሳ፡ ኣቲ ብመዋዘኑ፡ ምክራታትን ተወፋይነትን ዝተሰነዘሩ ታሪኽ ርእሰ-ምርኮባ ህግ፡ ውን፡ ብኣክያት ተዘንቅዮ ስለ ዘለ፡ ኣገዳሲ ድርብ ራዕሓ ክርኽብ ይ።

ተጋዳይ ሮግስ ጽዊት ግደ

መጽሓፍ “ስነ-አገባብ ምርምርን ኣገደስቲ መጽናዕታትን” ብዓይነታ ኣዚያ ፍልጻትን ኣገዳሲታትን ነፍሳ ርኽቢያ፡ ብኣራም ኣጠቓቕማ ደንብኣን ዋሕዚ ሓቀታን ኣትምህገን መጽሓፍ ይ። ንኹሉም መጥለላትን ኣገዳሲታትን ምርምር ጥበራዊ ኣብነታት፡ ኣሰንዶ ብዝከለኸ ብገጽርን ኣቀራርባ ኣስፈራቶም ኣላ፡ ኣብ ርእሲ ዚ፡ ብወጻኣተንታት ዝተጸሕፉ ታሪኽ ኤርትራን ብኣሃዱታት ትምህርትን መጽናዕትን ህዝባዊ ጥንባር ዝተካየዱ ሰራሓት ምርምርን ብምድህሳስ መንእሲያት ተመራመርቲ ኣፍልጦላም ኣብ ታሪኽ ኤርትራ ንክገብሩ ብኣደ ወጥኑ ነቲ ንና ዘይተዳህሰሰ ዘሉ ታሪኽና ብምርምር ከም ዝፍለጥ ቅዝባዳ ድግ ስቲ ካልኣይ ኣትድርሻ መጽሓፍ ይ። ስለቲ ሓደሻ ጸሐፊን ስቲ ዘክርዮኡን ንብጽድ ተሳታይ ተለታ፡ ብስም ክሉም ደገልኡን ዋርሳይን ኣመጥሖ፡

ዶ/ር ሓሊማ መሓመድ
ክሊላ ፖሊስ ደንብ ኣብ ትምህርቲ

ስነ - አገባብ ምርምርን . . .

ተስፋይ ቀለታ ደምሳሰ







HARMONY

QUARTERLY / MAGAZINE

Click below to visit our website

